KOSCIUSKO
HISTORY
NORTH
WEBSTER
08

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About the Author

Kip Sullivan was born in Gas City, Indiana, in 1906. His father and uncles were skilled window glass makers. When the natural gas boom began to subside in Indiana, Sullivan's family moved to Ohio where natural gas, an essential for hand-blown glass making, was still plentiful. As soon as the summer heat came, they "put the fire out" and came to Sechrist Lake until Fall.

Sullivan worked for the National Cash Register Company for twenty-two years, then came back to settle at Sechrist Lake where he became a Builder-Developer of real estate. An automobile accident in 1965 injured his spinal chord and left him paralyzed from the chest down, with only limited use of his hands.

In 1968, the Warsaw Times-Union suggested that he write a column three times a week called "Lakeland Reflections." He later compiled "Reflections" together with months of additional research, and wrote a history, North Webster: from Boydston's Mill to Camelot Square. Sullivan died on May 12, 1977, a few months after completing the book.

Dedicated

to

my wife

Mary Cookson Sullivan

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Introduction

The writer has been on the receiving end of countless kindnesses, granted by people who live in or near the Township known as Tippecanoe. Some of them, who would be recognized as "Natives," have suggested that I accumulate information and assemble it as some sort of a record of what has happened locally to give this area its distinctive character. The unwary reader should understand that this task has been accepted without training, talent or any strong inclination. Unlike most small rural communities, North Webster has never had any serious effort made toward a simple chronicle of its past. Unless someone of my generation takes time to do it, much of the past and the flavor of the past will be lost. There will be no one left to write it and no one interested in reading it. Since I have nothing else to do, it seems reasonable that I should try it.

It has often been noted that the area is populated by "Natives," "Lakers," and "the rest of us." While the rest of us far outnumber the other two groups, most of the persons who inhabit the pages of this work will be recognized as "Natives." Since the Indians have left, nobody can tell what is required to be a genuine "Native," but everybody knows who they are.

In telling the story of a small town, it is easiest to slip into the field of Genealogy. I hope serious students of that subject will not lean too heavily on the accuracy of the details recorded here. I've done the best that memory, aided by considerable research, could do. Mary and I have lived some of our childhood and most of our adult lives in Tippecanoe township. I attended a consolidated school where all grades shared the same room and have shared the amusement of the "Natives" while they watched the antics of the "Lakers." They watch like a small boy watches a struggling insect, pinned to a cardboard.

Thousands of these lakers have become permanent residents and have joined the rest of us but they soon learn that they can never become natives. It requires several generations and a particular state of mind. The new blood that keeps streaming into the Township brings new talent, some new money, new attitudes and often a few new problems.

Those of you who have read this far are invited to join us in viewing the township and its occupants through the long telescope of time. It might restir your memory and some of your dreams.

Kip Sullivan

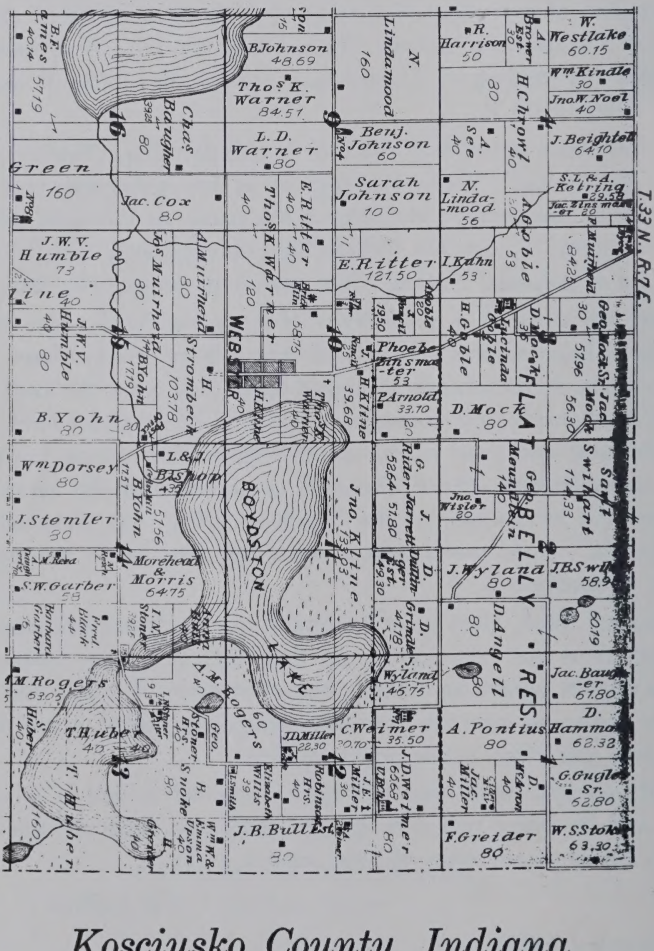
Dated January, 1977.

1879

Plat of Tippecanoe Township

Sections

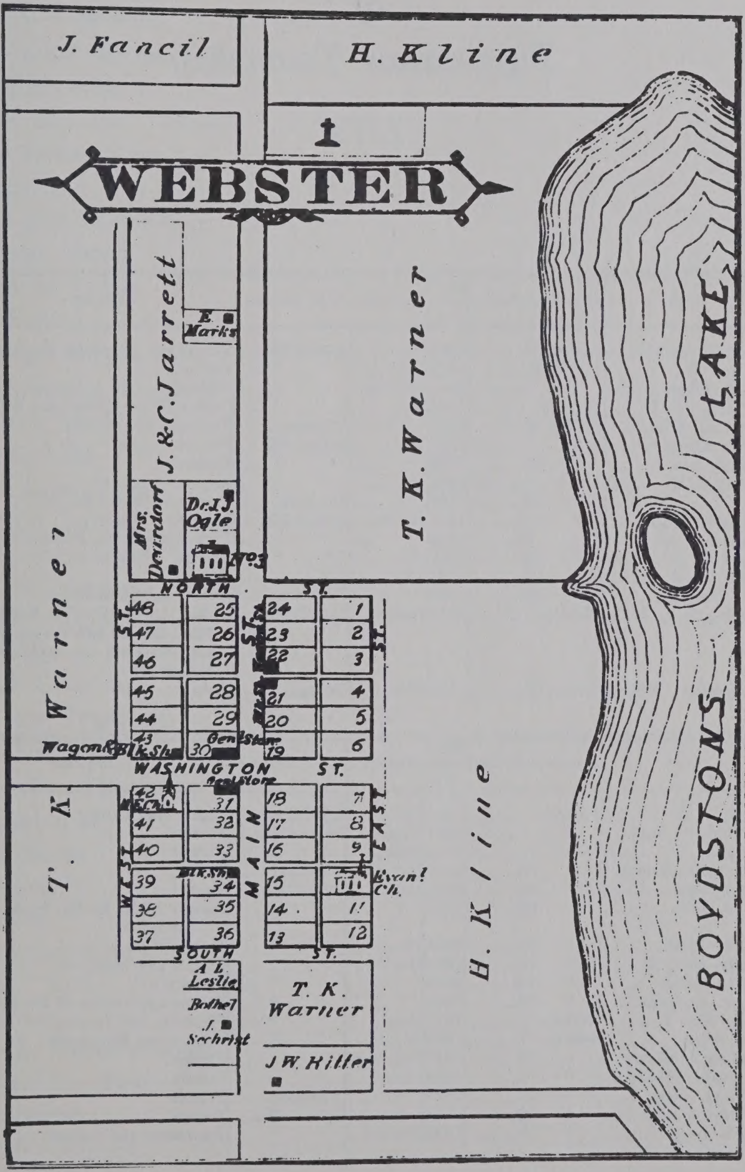
1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16



Kosciusko County, Indiana

Original "Webster" Plat

1879



Directory of Citizens
of
Tippecanoe Township
1879

NAME.	SECTION OR STREET.	Date of Settlement.	NATIVITY.	P. O. ADDRESS.	BUSINESS.
Black, Frederick	Section 14	1835	Ohio	Boydston's Mills	Farmer and Proprietor Sorghum-Mill.
Bull, A. G	“ 12	1848	Penn	“ “	Farmer.
Crowl, Hiram	“ 4	1844	Indiana	“ “	Farmer.
Carpenter, D. H	Webster	1844	Ohio	“ “	Cabinet-Maker, Undertaker & Trustee.
Firestone, John	Section 35	1837	“	Pierceton	Farmer.
Goble, Abram	“ 3	1835	“	Boydston's Mills	Retired Farmer.
Gerard, Isaac	“ 25	1838	“	“ “	Farmer.
Garber, S. W	“ 14	1850	“	“ “	Farmer.
Humble, J. W. V	“ 15	1860	“	Leesburg	Farmer and Stock-Raiser.
Johnson, Benj	“ 9	1834	W. Va	Boydston's Mills	Farmer.
Johnson, Isaac	“ 8	1834	“	“ “	Farmer and Prop'r Johnson Vineyard.
Jones, W. W	“ 25	1837	Ohio	“ “	Farmer.
Kiser, David	“ 26	1844	“	“ “	Farmer.
Kile, David L	“ 35	1846	“	Pierceton	Farmer and Stock Raiser.
Ketring, S. L., & Co.	Webster	1854	Indiana	Boydston's Mills	Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots and Shoes, Notions, etc. Our goods have been bought for cash, selected with care, and will be sold for ready pay only.
Kirkpatrick, William	Section 19	1836	Ohio	Oswego	Farmer.

NAME.	SECTION OR STREET.	Date of Settlement.	NATIVITY.	P. O. ADDRESS.	BUSINESS.
Long, J. E	Section 5	1856	Indiana	Leesburg	Teacher and Farmer.
Lindamood, Noah	“ 9	1857	Virginia	Boydston's Mills	Farmer.
Laughlin, W	“ 22	1840	Ohio	“ “	Farmer.
Makemson, Marshall	“ 33	1845	Indiana	Pierceton	Farmer.
Mock, Isaac	“ 26	1841	Ohio	Boydston's Mills	Farmer.
Mock, John	“ 23	1846	“	“ “	Proprietor Portable Saw-Mill, Threshing Machine, and Farmer.
Mock, Jacob	“ 23	1841	Penn	“ “	Retired Farmer.
Miller, John E	“ 12	1859	Ohio	“ “	Farmer and Mechanic.
Miller, Jacob	“ 12	1859	“	“ “	Farmer.
Myers, Jeremiah	“ 28	1849	“	“ “	Farmer and Justice of the Peace.
Ogle, John J	Webster	1876	Penn	“ “	Physician and Surgeon.
See, Adam	Section 4	1869	W. Va	“ “	Farmer and Blacksmith.
Strombeck, Henry	“ 15	1858	Germany	“ “	Farmer.
Westlake, Wesley	“ 4	1838	Ohio	“ “	Farmer.
Weaver, Perry A	“ 35	1848	“	Pierceton	Farmer.
Weimer, Joseph D	“ 12	1864	“	Boydston's Mills	Farmer.
Yohn, Benj	“ 15	1833	Penn	“ “	Postmaster and Farmer.

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J. Homer Shoop dies; founded sports palace

5-23-91

NORTH WEBSTER — J. Homer Shoop, 78, of North Webster and Miami, Fla., a former bank owner and founder of the International Palace of Sports in North Webster, was found dead of natural causes Tuesday in his Miami home.

Mr. Shoop purchased Farmers State Bank of North Webster in 1947 and was controlling shareholder for 33 years until he sold to Northwest Bancorp. Before that, he owned Citizens State Bank, Milford, from 1946 to 1948.

He was the driving force behind Palace of Sports, which took on a Camelot theme in North Webster and brought in well-known sports figures as "King of Sports" honorees.

Mr. Shoop, a promoter of North Webster's Mermaid Festival since the 1940s, began pushing the sports idea among the Kosciusko County town's business community in 1968. He owned the only bank and was considered the backbone of the community.

The museum opened in 1974, featuring wax figures of world-famous athletes. Others came for the festival, such as O.J. Simpson, Wayne Gretzky, Johnny Weissmuller, Mark Spitz and Jesse Owens. A youth scholarship fund also was started.

However, the palace gradually lost its appeal after Mr. Shoop sold the bank. Eventually, the building was sold and the contents of the museum were auctioned off.

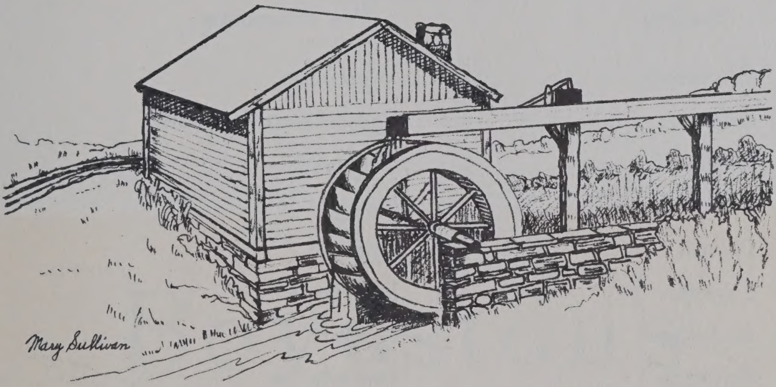
Mr. Shoop was born Nov. 16, 1912, in Buchanan. Surviving are two sisters, Helen Boyle and Norma Kierein, both of Mesa, Ariz.; and several nieces and nephews.

He was a member of the American Contract Bridge League and was a noted tennis player.

Services will be at 1 p.m. Wednesday at Eastlund-Harris Funeral Home, Syracuse. Burial will be in North Webster Cemetery. Friends may call from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday in the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be made to the International Palace of Sports Scholarship Fund.

Boydston's Mill



Camelot Square

Glossary

Names, words and places as they are pronounced by natives and most of the rest of us.

Spelling	We Pronounce
Wisconsin	Wesconsin
Syracuse	Saracuse or Sarycuse
Cromwell	Crumwell
Larwill	Larwell
Detroit	Deetroit
Ligonier	Leggoneer
Bockman	Buckman
Ferverda	Fervedy
Strombeck	Stroombeck
Rhubarb	Pieplant
Embarrassed	Got or Beat
Depleted	All

Chapter 1

Boydston's Mill

"The Stage is Set for Boydston's Mill..."

A $20 bill bears the picture of Andrew Jackson. He was in his second term as President when the first settlers came to the area that was to become known as Boydston's Mill and later as North Webster, Indiana. Jackson had become famous as an Indian fighter and even more famous as the "Hero of New Orleans." He was the first President from the wilderness country and John Quincy Adams called him "a barbarian who could not write a sentence of grammar and could hardly spell his name."

"Old Hickory" was followed in office by his Vice-President, Martin Van Buren who took over early in 1837. Jackson retired to live in Tennessee and has always been the hero of the Democrat political party. Despite the 1834 invention of the McCormick reaper and the recent appearance of the steam locomotive, 1837 was a year of severe economic panic. Van Buren set about selling the western lands to speculators who bought vast tracts and sold bits of them to settlers without ever seeing the land. Many tracts were deeded directly from Van Buren to the settlers. An incomplete list of those newcomers would include Benjamin Yohn, Pennsylvania, Benjamin Johnson, West Virginia, Ephriam Muirheid, Virginia, Isaac Johnson, William Divinney, John Reidinger, Robert Shoemaker, Abram Goble, Frederick Black, W. W. Jones, Wesley Westlake, Isaac Gerard and John Henwood. Most of these came from Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Deeds, Mortgages and Wills were usually prepared by Justices of the Peace and Notary Publics. The spelling of family names were often changed by the penmanship or hearing disability of the J P or Notary. Some of these early documents were written in the Boydston's Mill area by: Benjamin Johnson, J.P. (1839), George Weaver, J.P. (1847), W. B. Wade, J.P. (1848), and George R. Thralls, Notary Public in 1850.

The Tract Book in the county Recorder's office indicates that Ephriam S. Muirheid entered the land that was to become a millsite on October 14, 1835. President Martin Van Buren deeded these 55.9 acres to him on March 15, 1837.

North Webster was incorporated a town in 1937. The residents voted (102 for—85 against) on May 4th and the County Commissioners accepted on May 7th.

Mr. Muirheid borrowed $500 from the State Sinking Fund (payable in advance at 9% annually) and set about building a mill and the dam which changed several small deep ponds into quite a large lake called Boydston's Lake which has been called Webster Lake for many years. Thomas Boydston bought the mill, dam site and the water rights from Ephriam and Miriam Muirheid in December of 1846. He was the postmaster and the mill served as the postoffice so mail for the area was addressed to "Boydston's Mill." Mr. Muirheid and his descendants owned and occupied for as long as 130 years, the land astride the Tippecanoe river west of the millsite. This stream flows to James and Tippecanoe lakes and it crosses the present county road #750 East under a bridge that has long been called "Morehead's Bridge." That name evolved from Muirheid many years ago. By 1846, settlers were arriving regularly and included were Daniel Carpenter, a cabinet maker, undertaker and future Township Trustee, Hiram Crowl, farmer, and John Mock, proprietor of a portable sawmill, a thrashing machine and some farms.

Thomas Boydston was a very active and gregarious citizen and to say his career was interesting would be an understatement. He came from Ohio where he had been a farmer and had manufactured woolen goods. He and his wife Jane arrived in 1842 with their family. Their children were Ambrose, George, Elizabeth, Clementine, Addie, Seena, Josephine and Mary Jane. They operated both a sawmill and a gristmill until the spring of 1850 when Thomas joined the California Gold-Rush. He went by ship all the way around South America after having rented the mill to Benjamin Yohn who had been an employee but became a relative in January of 1851 when he married Elizabeth J. Boydston, the eldest daughter. Boydston returned across country by horse in 1853. Active in Whig politics he was soon elected to the Indiana State Assembly. Returning from Indianapolis by train be caught a severe cold while waiting in an unheated depot. This turned into pneumonia and he died March 17, 1861 at the age of 54. When the postoffice was in the mill, from 1848 to 1861 it is said that both outgoing and incoming letters were to be found in the same barrel. Riders passing through delivered letters and picked up those destined in the direction they were heading. In 1853 the mill was destroyed by fire and Boydston rebuilt it in 1856. Ben Yohn became the owner after Boydston died and operated it until 1868. It was natural that the address was listed as "Bodyston's Mill." Jane Boydston had a brother, Elijah Hayes, who lived in Warsaw. The Hayes Hotel was the social and business center of the town until it was torn down to provide a location for the Lake City Bank building.

Elizabeth Boydston, Thomas' daughter, married Benjamin Yohn while her father was on his search for gold trip in California. The mill had been rented to Ben before the trip began. It must have been a revelation when Tom Boydston returned and found Elizabeth and Ben had wed and that the mill had gone up in flames. The mixed emotions included pleasure at the marriage and dismay at the fire. Ben and Elizabeth Yohn operated the newly rebuilt mill and their son "Billy" ran the mill at late as the 1920s. Josephine, another Boydston daughter married Isaiah Mowrey in 1866. Josephine died quite young and Billy Yohn's stepdaughter, Frances Martin, lived in her home near the mill-race until 1974. Her mother Jane raised Josephine's little boy whose name was Wilbur Mowrey.

A visitor to the site of Boydston's Mill can see a small burial plot where there are five graves in an area about 33x40 feet. The headstones indicate that this is the resting place of Ambrose, 1830-1849, George, 1836-1855, Mary Jane, 1842-1848, Josephine, 1844-1873, and Thomas G. Boydston himself, 1807-1861. Many local people have been puzzled as to what last name belonged to "Josephine." The other children buried there were surely young enough to be unmarried. Pansy Hoppus, of Traverse City, Michigan gave the writer the information that Josephine was her grandmother, the wife of Isaiah Mowrey. Josephine had requested that she be buried beside her father, Thomas Boydston, before she died at age 29. Why her last name was omitted from her monument is known only to the long dead undertaker. Could he have been Daniel Carpenter?

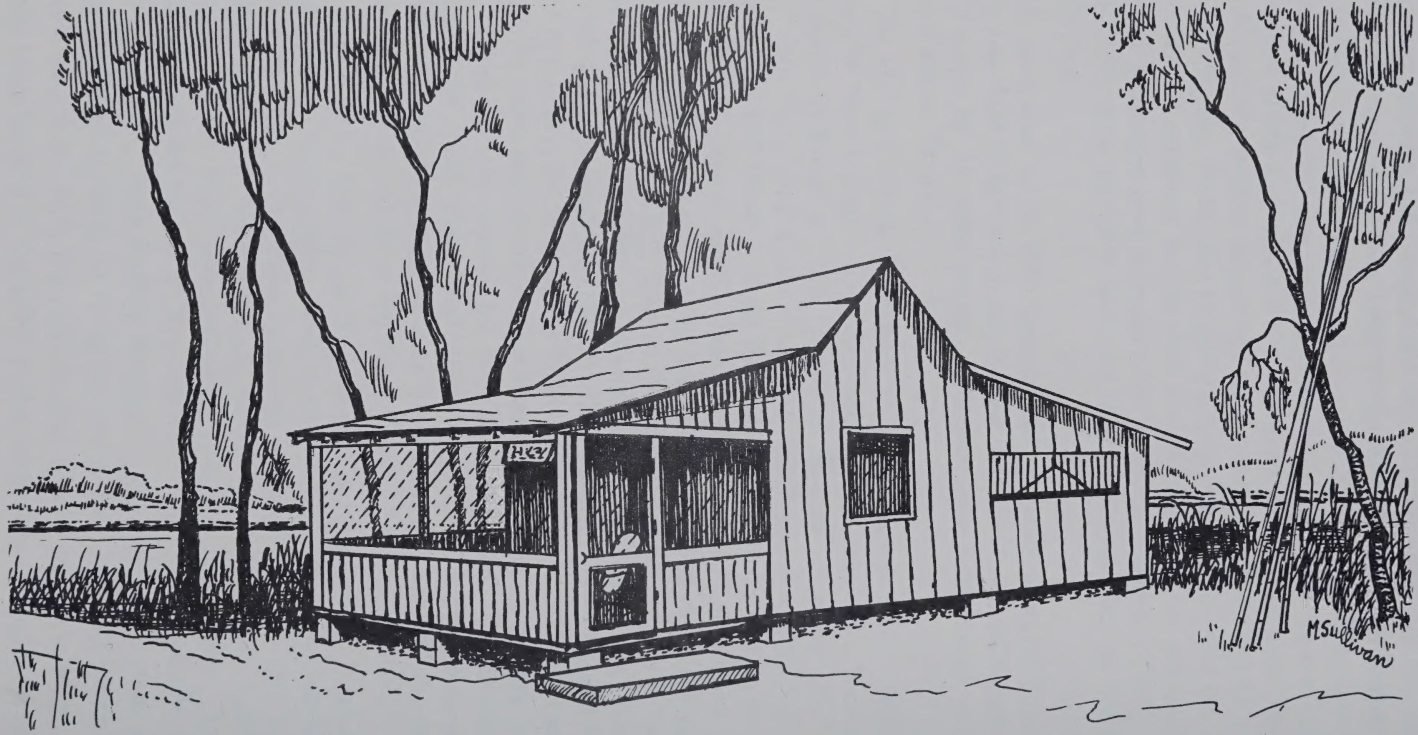
Tippecanoe township experienced great surges of immigration when public lands were first made available to settlers, again after the War between the States, after the first World War and once again after the end of the second World War. Thousands of summer visitors enjoyed the lakes and the hospitality of the natives. Year after year, more and more of them decided— "this is such a nice place to visit, we'd like to live here." Webster Lake was rimmed by houses where ever the land was solid enough to support a foundation. As the town of North Webster grew, the mill was less vital to the economy of the area but the mill dam was the key to the very existence of the lake. The mill burned several times and was rebuilt. The owners and the operators changed several times and after the 1949 fire it was not rebuilt. The description of the property as shown in abstracts often contained the wording:— "excepting the following lot reserved as a private burying ground." This small lot was described carefully but was neglected and almost forgotten. Other items in the deeds were not ignored. One of them appears below.

"X number of acres, more or less,: and including also all lands and water privileges and meanderings covered by the mill dam and the waters of Boydston's Mill Pond." There were times when property owners and visitors alike feared that they were liable for an annual fee for docking or maintaining a boat on the lake. After the last fire the Webster Lake Property Owners Association purchased the dam site and the surrounding property from the last proprietor of the mill. His name was Milo Long. Ownership of the water rights insured that Webster Lake would survive but in 1952 it was apparent that the dam was in an unreliable condition. People of the town and township rallied to support the rebuilding of the dam. Money was contributed, much of the labor was volunteered and several public spirited souls signed mortgage notes to guarantee the repayment of funds advanced by the local bank for the costs of the dam site and the new dam. For several years the local Lions Club used the money earned by the Mermaid Festival to make payments on this mortgage. Finally the Property Owners Association sold the area except for the land necessary for the control of the dam and the mill race. Nice residential properties now surround what was once "Boydston's Mill," but hardly 1% of the local residents have seen the "burying ground" or are aware of its existence.

A newspaper ad in 1897 depicts the:— "North Webster Flouring Mill"— We manufacture but one grade of flour, and that is the GOLDEN ANCHOR. It is made by full roller process. We also have Bolted meal, unbolted meal and Graham Flour."

The abstracts of the Boydston's Mill area include many interesting items. Some of them follow:— June 30, 1856 shows a deed from Thomas and Jane Boydston to Benjamin Yohn for .79 of an acre. A home site? A business lot? Mr. Yohn was a merchant and the husband of Elizabeth Boydston. March 3, 1859 shows a deed from the Boydstons to Ben Yohn for 3 acres and 16 rods (square rods). "The said Boydston is to retain the privilege of using the Tippecanoe River that runs through said land for mill use as it now runs." March 16, 1861, Thomas G. Boydston died. May 17, 1861 shows a deed from Jane Boydston, a single woman, to Joseph and Amanda Leslie for 52 acres, consideration $5,000. May 28, 1862 shows a deed from Joseph and Amanda Leslie to Benjamin Yohn for 55.90 acres, more or less, "together with the mills and improvements thereunto belonging, except such portion of the above now owned by said Benjamin Yohn. Consideration $5,000. August 25, 1863 shows that Jane Boydston, a widow, married Peter L. Runyon Sr. July 28, 1868 shows a deed from Ben Yohn to Jacob W. Bishop "excepting from this deed the Burial Ground 2 rods x 2½ rods."

Jesse Beghtel first visited this township in 1842 with his brother and Fredrick Fernsel, coming from Stark county, Ohio. They traveled by foot and made the trip in ten days, stopping in Huntington to visit friends. Two others started at the same time. John Kuhn and Jacob Fashbaugh rode horseback, but those who walked arrived one day sooner. Mr. Beghtel's brother blistered his feet on this long walk which occurred during an unusually hot fall season. Jesse Beghtel returned in 1847 with his mother and her two other children to settle on newly purchased farm land in Section 4 of Tippecanoe township. With the help of John Mock, who came from Ohio at the same time, he built a log cabin in the wilderness. He later served as Township Trustees, assessor, and was treasurer for 6 years. His parents came from Pennsylvania and their parents from Germany.



A typical lake cottage of the 1920's

The "Mocks" and the "Kuhns"

The Mocks were a very prominent and prolific family in the area. They trace their ancestry from one Hans George Mack (pronounced Mock), who served in the 7th Pennsylvania regiment during the American Revolution. In Lancaster county, Pennsylvania there is an early recorded deed signed by Hans George Mack and his wife Sophia (signed with her "mark"). He was born in Germany and arrived in America on October 23, 1752 on the ship Bawley out of Rotterdam at the age of 17. He served in the army during the American War for Independence. In Harrisburg, the Archives of the Pennsylvania State Library, record his discharge dated March 27, 1777.

George Mack's son John moved from Bedford county, Pennsylvania to Tuscarawas county, Ohio in 1815. He operated the first saw mill there and also built furniture. In 1847 he brought most of his family to Kosciusko county to settle in Tippecanoe township. His sons were John, Jacob, George, and David. Daughters were Susan (Kuhn), Barbara (Garber), Julia (Durham), Nancy (Tomer), Catherine (Fashbaugh), and Sarah (Bender). The Mocks' of that generation were close friends with the Indians and at least one was said to be able to talk with the "Squawbucks" in their own language. The Mock family history includes tales of extreme hardships, privation and illness. The struggle for survival in this strange and hostile land seemed endless. They were beset by the "Ague" and the "Grippe" visited them often. One story tells of a 60-year-old man who died after walking in the snow barefoot in a vain effort to reduce his fever. While he lay dying his brother was being buried and his daughter died the following morning. There were hardly enough well Mocks to care for the ailing. Another story recorded in the Mock history shows the importance of property rights. It tells about an early settler chasing a newcomer who took refuge in the cabin of a man named Warner. The guest was granted complete protection as Warner stood at his door and was obliged to use his axe to split the head of the furious pursuer.

Genealogy buffs who are descended from Susan Mock Kuhn might be interested in the D A R membership of her granddaughter. It was granted by the National Board of Management, February 1, 1944 and was signed by Georgia Schlosser, Recording Secretary General. Her National Number is 342915 and her name was Ada Kuhn Butz Chilton Johnson, daughter of Isaiah Kuhn (1850-1925) who was the last child born of Susan Mock Kuhn. Isaiah was the only child Susan had who was born in Indiana and was the great grandson of the aforementioned Hans George Mack. Any reference to the fecundity or the longevity of the Kuhns should not overlook the fact that the mother of John Kuhn's 14 children was Susan Mock, who married him when she was only 14. Her first child was born in 1825 and the last in 1850. She outlived her husband by 46 years and to this day descendants of the Mocks and the Kuhns continue the tradition of outliving their spouses. Closely related to the Mock family was the Kuhn family and almost any name recognized as "native" can be related by marriage or descended from the Mocks or the Kuhns or both. The two families were equally blessed with many children who lived long lives. Many of them chose to live near their birthplace.

Susan Mock Kuhn was an avid reader in German as well as in English although her formal education consisted of two weeks of schooling as a very young girl. Left a widow when her youngest child was 10, she supported her family as a seamstress, while managing her farm. Material for clothing was raised and prepared on the farm. When her sons were in the Union Army, she cared for their families. With more than her share of vitality, wit and wisdom she was an extraordinary woman who took charge of her life without benefit of "Women's Lib."

These two large families can be confusing to the readers, the writers and the general public but you can rest assured that the members themselves understand the differences. So now—The Kuhns.

John Kuhn (1802-1860) was born in Germany and family records indicate that his Mother was French. He married Susan Mock (1809-1906) and the names of their children in proper order were: Jacob, John, David, Polly, Isaac, Phillip, a daughter who died an infant, George, Daniel, Susan, Julia Ann, Elizabeth, Josiah and Isaiah. John Kuhn and his brother Jacob bought their freedom from military conscription so they could take passage to America. John was not a pacifist and his descendants have taken part in all of America's wars. At least 3 of his sons joined the Union forces during the War Between the States. His great grandson was an authentic hero in World War One and the American Legion Post in North Webster bears his name, Herbert Kuhn. He was killed in a train accident while still in France.

In 1848 John Kuhn walked from Tuscarawas County, Ohio to Kosciusko county, Indiana. He purchased 43 acres north of North Webster. This farm is presently occupied by the Hiram Ferverda family.

The following year John moved his large family by canal boat as far as Fort Wayne and the rest of their trip was made by ox-team. After his family was settled, he walked back to Ohio to continue his work in the coal mines. He made this trip several times before finally joining his family as a permanent resident. Vigorous and rugged, he was reputed to be "able to whip any man in the county." As it is with all men, the fate of the male descendents of John and Susan Kuhn, was largely determined by their brides. Their occupations ranged from farmer, blacksmith, merchant, preacher, banker, doctor, politician, educator, guide and trapper. Those who lived near the lakes were gentle, kind, soft-spoken and generous. They would grant you almost any favor except punctuality.

The "Bockmans" and the "Klines"

William Bockman (1816-1890) was an itinerant preacher for the Evangelical Church. After a much traveled career he settled down on a farm near Syracuse. His son John was born December 4, 1847 and died October 25, 1923. He too was an Evangelical preacher. After serving in many churches in Ohio and Indiana he returned to Webster to open a mercantile store. His aging father William came to live with him and sold his farm near Syracuse. John Bockman was a Republican and served as township Trustee. He was postmaster for seven years until 1885, when "the administration changed and banged him out." The new President was Grover Cleveland, who appointed John A. Ketring to succeed him. Meanwhile he had married Matilda Kline, daughter of Henry and Christina Klein. The reader will notice the change in the spelling of the family name from one generation to the next. The children of John and Matilda Bockman were:— William H., Lura Ella, John Calvin, and Bertha May Bockman. William H. Bockman (1871-1932) operated a retail store for many years in North Webster. At one time he sent grocery orders around Webster Lake by boat. Roads and cars were not dependable and the "grocery boat" was very welcome, especially when it also delivered the mail. Bill Bockman somehow found time to operate the "OK Fishing & Boat Equipment Co." He invented and manufactured the OK Oar-lock, and a clamp-on fish net for holding live fish along the side of a boat. He also ran a small movie near his store which attracted many from the Saturday night shopping crowd. It was a familiar sound to hear him call through a megaphone— "Time to get your tickets! Picture is about to start." His children were Howard, Carl, Lura and Bernice who died quite young. Lura played the piano to lend color and suspense to the silent movies. Howard and Carl used to drive a huckster wagon through the country on a regular schedule. They did not know about the 40 hour week. "Bill" Bockman was married to Elizabeth Willard, daughter of Cornelious.

A huckster wagon was anticipated all along its route. Pulled by a team of horses, it was complete with spill-proof shelves that held canned goods and regular staples of the day. Trading with the grocery or wagon often meant "trade" as goods were exchanged for eggs and poultry. Bill Bockman built a fine brick home on lot #15 in the original plat of Webster. This imposing and well preserved home still stands just south of the Palace of Sports. The names "John" and "Bill" appeared in almost every generation of Bockmans.

John Klein (1778-1835) was 69 years of age when he accompanied his son Henry to settle in Tippecanoe township. His strong German heritage enabled him to survive six years in this cold and hostile land. He died in 1835 and is buired in North Webster with his wife Julia (1797-1852).

Henry Klein (1816-1886) was born in Germany. He met and soon married Christina Baugher (1818-1888), also German born while they were both employed as tailors in the same shop in Ohio. They had 12 children and moved to Webster in 1847 where they bought 56 acres of land northeast of the village. Henry cleared his land, continued his tailoring at night, and soon opened a store which prospered, and he gradually accumulated more land. He was a Democrat and attended the Evangelical church. His son John was the 10th child and was born in Tuscarawas county, Ohio. John married German-born Elizabeth Zintzmaster in 1867. Their 5th child was John J. Kline who became a Republican and a miller by trade. While he had little formal education, he taught himself accounting and was a skilled merchandiser. He was a charter member of Hacker Lodge #321, F & A M, and was secretary of that Masonic body for seven years. In 1886 the officers of Hacker Lodge included:— Isaac Johnson, WM; S. W. Garber, SW; Dr. J. J. Ogle, JW; D. H. Carpenter, Treasurer; John Kline, Secretary; John Ketring, SD; A. Ritter, JD; Dr. Sam Junkin, Chaplain; Wm. McMillan and H. Hess, Stewards; and E. Phelps, Tyler.

Ed's Kline father & mother

bro (C. Hersey)

Substantial land owners, the Kline family sold the land that was used to develop Epworth Forest, and much of the lake shore area of North Webster. John J. Kline built a fine brick home on Lot #26 in the Orginal Plat of Webster. This once proud structure still endures on Main Street, next to an abandoned movie theater.

The Abstract for Lot #29 does not indicate that a Mr. Klein ever owned it but his name appears in a way that explains the rugged life of those times.

The name Henry Klein prompts a brief review of a real-estate abstract that covers the area in the "central city" of the town of North Webster.

The Original tract book of Kosciusko county shows that John Reidinger "entered" 160 acres in Section 10 of Tippecanoe township on Christmas day in 1835 and received his Patent from President Martin Van Buren March 20, 1837. In August of that same year Christopher Lightfoot, the County Surveyor laid off a plat of 48 lots called "Webster" for R. R. Shoemaker. The following spring, on March 7, 1838, John Reidinger deeded the whole 160 acres, including the lots, to R. R. Shoemaker for $500. By April 12th Mr.

Shoemaker had deeded lots 19, 20, 29 and 30 to George Warner for $50. On September 25, 1843 George Warner deeded lots 29 & 30 plus lot #28 to Thomas K. Warner for $50. Almost seven years later, on August 13, 1850, Thomas K. and Hester A. Warner deeded the same three lots to Thomas L. O'Brien for $70.

"How Things Were in 1850"

The 1850 census indicates that Tippecanoe township already had a population of 620, with 112 houses and 115 families. There were 167 students attending school and 73 adults who could neither read nor write. Many deeds at that time were signed with his or her "Mark (X)". Legal documents were recorded in English so some prosperous and intelligent settlers were obliged to use this method of signing because they had never learned to read in that required language. They trusted the Notary Public, usually a friend, to read and explain the documents.

In 1850 Indiana University had 200 students and the state was divided between the Abolitionists and those who felt that slave owners should not be deprived of their property. Slaves who managed to get across the Ohio river found Hoosiers willing to help them travel north on well organized routes know as "Underground Railroads." The stations were homes where the blacks would be hidden during the daylight hours. At night they were guided through the safest route to the next secure station.

Many of the early Tippecanoe township settlers came part of the way on the Wabash and Erie canal. By 1850 this canal was making slow progress as it pushed west from Fort Wayne. It was planned to become the world's longest canal (612 miles) and reach from Lake Erie to Evansville on the Ohio river. The canal era in Indiana was a fiasco as the canals cost ten times as much as estimated because of graft, corruption, and the ignoring of sound economics. The holders of the canal bonds lost their money and Indiana went baukrupt. The result was a new constitution that prohibited Indiana from ever again borrowing money.

To get back to Tom O'Brien and his ill fated real estate venture. We find that three months after buying the lots he was obliged to mortgage two of them to Benjamin Yohn for $100 that he needed to provide a "bond" to guarantee his appearance before the next Circuit Court to answer a charge or "Threatening to beat and kill one Henry Klein of Webster, and also for threatening to destroy said Klein's property." On February 18, 1851 O'Brien deeded lots 28 and 29 to Benjamin and Elizabeth Yohn for $160. A month later they sold the two lots to John Mock Jr. for the same price. Nine years later John and Lydia Ann (Lydiann) Mock sold lot #29 to Jesse Austin for $300. Mr. Austin sold it to Daniel H. Carpenter in the midst of the War Between the States (12/15/1863).

There is no evidence that the "good old days" of 1850 nurtured either prejudice or violence but it is clear that an Irish name seldom appeared as one holding title to real estate in those days. The 1840s brought great waves of Irish immigrants due to the "Potato Famine."

It is interesting to note that Lot #29, the present site of the liquor store, was held by the Carpenter family during the terms of Presidents Lincoln, Johnson, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Harrison, McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, Hoover, F.D.R., and Harry Truman. During three great wars and several smaller wars this family continued to pay taxes and occupy this same property. The house has now been moved one block west where it is used as the office of the local dentist. Many parts of it indicate that it must be one of the very oldest houses in North Webster. The floor joists are made of complete logs with the top sides shaved flat to receive the flooring boards. Some of the small panes of window glass were made before any attention was given to stones, blisters or wrinkles. The house has been remodeled several times for several differnt uses. It was used as a meeting place for the "Hacker Lodge" of the Masonic order. There was a square and compass emblem set in the front step.

The "Shocks . . .
Adam to Eli"

Adam Shock was born in Pennsylvania in 1765, about 15 years after his parents had arrived from Germany. On gaining maturity, he followed the Ohio river to Cincinnati, went overland to settle in Montgomery county, Ohio, where he raised 12 children. He died in 1840. His first child was Jacob Shock (1789-1869) who left Ohio for Elkhart county, Indiana, but settled in Kosciusko county in 1852. Nine of his eleven children had large families. His 3rd child was John Shock (1815-1901) who married Sarah Cornish (1812-1882). Their 6th child was Henry Shock who was born in 1850 and married Elizabeth Auer. Their 2nd child was Eli Shock (1887-1975) who married Osee Kiser in 1896. They raised 5 boys and 4 girls, all of whom attended a one room school located north of North Webster called the "Africa" school. Almost all of these continued to live in the same area where their final resting place will likely be in McClintic Cemetery near North Webster. Several generations of Shocks are known to have married young, raised large families, stayed on the land, paid close attention to the schools, and died still married to their original spouses.

The "Warners"

Any observer of the history of North Webster must be reluctant to try to separate that story from the family history of the Warners. There are few descendants of that remarkable family still living in the area and they don't carry the family name. This fact does not grant much latitude to historians because the scholarly Warners kept very careful family records.

Joseph Warner (1738-1842) was the youngest of nine children. His father was born in London, his mother in Dublin. Joseph was born near Chesapeake Bay and died in Illinois when he was 104. He is said to have ridden horseback from Fort Wayne to Benton, about 50 miles, in one day when he was 101 years of age. The first of his three children was Henry.

Henry Warner (1777-1843) was born in Virginia. He married Sarah (Sally) Kirby in 1802. She was from Alexandria and they soon moved west where they settled and farmed on land near Cincinnati, Ohio. They were blessed with 16 children, 8 boys and 8 girls. In 1836 when he was 59 years of age, Henry rode to Tippecanoe township with his eldest son, James, where he 'entered' 800 acres near what is now North Webster. During the winter of 1838 when he was 61 and Sally was 53 they led a memorable trek through an unmarked forest to settle in Indiana. Their group included their 11 unmarried children, a brother with his wife and 4 children, and another brother with two childen. Possessions were hauled on wagons pulled by one 4-horse team, a 3-horse team, a 2-horse team and 1 spare horse. Livestock included:— 50 head of sheep, 40 hogs and 10 head of cattle. They started for North Webster on February 12, driving the animals and themselves through the wilderness to Dayton, to St. Mary's, and Fort Wayne. They found few roads and had no maps. The land of their destination was occupied by the Pottawatomies and the Miamis who were mostly removed within 4 or 5 years.

Thomas Kirby Warner (1815-1895) came along on this expedition with his family when he was 23. He did not want to come and did not like it after they arrived. He left after only 4 days to return to Cincinnati to continue his schooling. Later the same year he visited his family here and found his brother Warren very much dissatisfied with what he called "this heathen country." Henry had given him a cabin and 160 acres, which he returned saying "I would not stay and make heathens of my children if he gave me the whole of Tippecanoe township." So Thomas K. rigged up a team and drove them back to Ohio. Thinking about his brother's opinion of such a heathenish country, he decided to go back and try to be a teacher. He brought along several copies of McGuffey's Readers, some ink, stationery, some window sashes with glass to make Warren's cabin light enough for teaching. He also brought 100 grafted apple trees, 8 pear and 12 cherry trees which he planted. He held the first school in Tippecanoe township in 1838. Seven of his pupils were his own brothers and sisters. The rest came from within 3 or 4 miles. One of his early students was "Bill" Squawbuck who later became chief of his Pottawatomie tribe after they were sent to Kansas.

Tom Warner resented his father's opinion that educating girls was a waste of time and money so he determined to teach them equally with the boys. The following agreement was signed by parents and the teacher.

Subscription School ARTICLE OF AGREEMENT, Syracuse, Indiana 1840. "We, the undersigned subscribers, do agree to employ Thomas K. Warner to teach a school of spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic for 3 months or 65 days, from and after the 14th day of December 1840, at the rate of $2 for each scholar. We, the said subscribers, agree to find a school house and furnish firewood in proportion to each scholar, and also keep the said Warner in boarding for the said term, and for that true performance, (a guarantee!), we bind ourselves to pay the said Warner the sum of $2 for each scholar. Saturdays excepted, school will begin at half past eight a.m. and dismiss at 4 p.m. Witness our hands, this 14th day of December, 1840." (Educators today offer no guarantee, but charge a bit more.)

Subscribers	No. of Scholars	
John Baird	4	(Neighbors often split the payment for an energetic scholar.)
George Weaver	2½	
Mr. Roisan	1	
Squire M. Cory	2	
George Phebus	1	
Sarah Sulsar	2	
Henry Ward	1	
Harvey Vaneman	2	
Samuel Crosson	1½	
	17	Total scholars $34)

Until 1910, the only school in North Webster was a grammar school located on the site of the present Church of God. High School students were obliged to go to Warsaw, Leesburg or Syracuse. Trustee Henry Strombeck started to build the original part of the present North Webster school in 1910. He died before it was completed and his son Milo Strombeck was appointed trustee. Milo completed the school in 1911 and served as Trustee for several terms thereafter. While the school was being built, high school classes were held in a building just north of what is now Thornburg's drugstore.

The school was enlarged and a gym was added in 1928. Milo Strombeck was still the trustee. In the early 1950s, a large addition was built on the south end by Trustee Ira Nine, which included the first school cafeteria. After a fire destroyed the gymnasium, a large addition was made to the north end of the school in 1956. This included a larger gym, stage and some class rooms. Everett Smith was the Trustee during that period. In 1962 the local school was incorporated into the present Lakeland School District Corporation.

Thomas Warner married Hester Ann Benford in 1845 and they had eight children, 4 boys and 4 girls. Their names:— Alica (Humble), Chloe (Jarrette), Mary Elizabeth (Ketring), Sarah (Ketring), Lorenzo, Herschel Jasper, Albert Bruce Christy, and William Henderson Colfax Warner. Thomas K. and his father Henry were old line Whigs politically. T. K. first voted for Henry Clay at 21 in 1836. After the G.O.P. was organized, he was a strong Republican and was always in favor of women's suffrage. The first marriage in Tippecanoe township was between Amelia Ann Warner and Rev. Samuel Young in the year 1840. A. B. Warner built the Mid-Lakes Hotel in 1885 on the corner in front of the present site of the Counting House Bank. It contained 18 rooms, a dining room, lobby and elaborate stables. The cost exceeded $2,500. The hotel register indicates that guests came from as far away as Alaska, and England. They all had to make the last leg of their trips by horseback, horse drawn hack or buggy. The Warner family has always been important in local politics, education, religion and farming.

A Typical Obituary of September, 1905

Hester Ann Warner, widow of Thomas K. and mother of our County Commissioner A. B. Warner. Grandma Warner, as she was familiarly called, was well known and beloved by a host of friends in Tippecanoe township, having settled in this part of the county in the early days when the war hoop of the Indian was heard in the forest, and the tepee and papoose and squaw were her nearest neighbors. She was married to Thomas K. Warner in 1843, and with him toiled and labored to clear the land that the greater part of North Webster now stands upon. She was the mother of 8 children, 6 of whom survive her:— A. B. Warner, Wm. H. Warner, Mrs. James Jarrette of North Webster, Mrs. S. L. Ketring of Syracuse, Mrs. S. F. Humble of Fairchild, Wisconsin, and Mrs. J. A. Ketring of Chesterton, Indiana. One child died in infancy and the oldest son Herschel, enlisted in Company B 13 Indiana, and gave his life for his country's cause in the Civil War. Grandma Warner lived to see her posterity reach the number of 20 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. Thus has ended a life full of toil, yet radiant with sunshine. She met her Waterloos but met them like a Wellington and, having done the best she could until the evening shades had enfolded the day, she lay down her head to rest, to sleep the sleep of the just. The funeral services were conducted in the M. E. church by her pastor Rev. Coffin, Tuesday morning, September 12, 1905. The remains were laid away in the North Webster Cemetery. (Warsaw Daily Times report.)

Now, more about the Warners of North Webster.

A. B. C. Warner (1857-1938), son of Thomas K., married Lida C. Humble, daughter of J. W. V. Humble. Their children (2 boys and 2 girls) were:—

Ethel Eugenia (Coffin) Dillman	(1880)
Thomas Kirby Warner	(1882)
Florence Rue (Dean) Allen	(1886)
Robert Miles Warner	(1888)

Multiple names must have been fashionable with the family. Albert Bruce Christy Warner married the daughter of John Wallace Vance Humble. Her name was Judith Louisa Catherine (Lida). Another unusual stituation in the Warner family was the distribution of the children evenly by sex, as well as the reduction in their number by half at each generation. Henry Warner had 16 children, 8 boys and 8 girls. His son Thomas K. had 8 children, 4 boys and 4 girls. His son A. B. had 4, 2 boys and 2 girls. His son Robert had 1 boy and 1 girl: Robert and Martha. The Warner men tended to live long and vigorous lives. Joseph lived to be 104, his son Henry only lived to be 66, but his grandson T. K. the first lasted 80 years while his son A. B. lived to 81 and his grandson T. K. the 2nd died during his 85th year. At the time of this writing Florence Warner Allen lives in Tucson, Arizona in her 90th year.

William Henderson Colfax Warner, the youngest child of T. K. the 1st, was the father of Stanley Warner whose children were Katherine and Thomas K. Warner the 3rd. "Tommie" Warner was named for the first T. K. because they were both born on the last day of February. He left no male heir.

Local people remember the Warners for their dry and wry sense of humor. The following anecdote, lifted from the Warner "Family history" is typical of amusement without thigh-slapping "belly laughter."

Old Dr. Burt, a pioneer physician of Oswego, was noted for his eccentricities as well as his uncertain diagnoses. One day he rapidly rode down the road, and hitching his horse in front of one of the log cabins at Bodyston's Mill, he went inside to see his patient. A farmer took notice of his haste and hailed him down when he came by on his return trip. He was curious as to the nature of the malady from which his neighbor's daughter was suffering. "Very ill, very ill indeed" said the Doctor as he started to move on, hoping to escape further questioning. "Hold on Doctor, just what is the matter?" persisted the farmer. "Homliness, my dear sir," said the pill man, "and if it strikes in she is as dead as a door-nail. There is a lot of it going around in this area at present."

Among several letters saved by Warner descendants is one from a brother to one of the first settlers imploring his pioneer brother to come back to civilization (Ohio). "If you stay in that God-for-saken place your children will surely marry up with some of those Huns." (Sure enough the Warners did marry into a couple of generations of Baughers and Weimers.)

For many years it was taken for granted that any year-end deficit at the Methodist Church would be paid by the Warners. When the local school board and the local Lions Club needed expansion room, nobody was surprised when Thomas K, II, furnished it at a very low price with a "No interest, pay when you can" agreement.

Chapter 2

Indians

Betwixt the Potawatomis and Miamis

The Bodyston's Mill area had no Indian encampments of a permanent type. Sandwiched between the Miamis to the northeast and the Potawatomis to the southwest, this area was criss-crossed by Indian trails because of the many lakes and streams that afforded the tribes good hunting and easy transportation. These trails ran through heavily wooded hills and marshes and were barely wide enough to allow one Indian at a time to pass through. Most of the Indians had no horses and the trail was wide enough for a squaw to follow the noble warrior, carrying the provisions and often a papoose. Kosciusko county was part of Elkhart county and was called Turkey Creek township until 1833 when the Indians ceded this territory to the United States. Thirty white families camped on the edge of what was to become Kosciusko county and were the first white permanent settlers to rush down and claim the land. The Bodyston's Mill area was not the most attractive land available and the first families chose the rich level prairie land around Leesburg, Milford and Clunette. In order to understand the Indians that traveled steadily through the Boydston and North Webster area, it is proper to consider the tribes and their settlements which surrounded the neighborhood.

The Potawatomis were river Indians and their villages were strung along the Tippecanoe river as it flowed southwest. The Miamis were part of a much larger Indian Nation and were inclined to be less mobile. The first white settlers disturbed the Indians only because they built mills on the streams and at the outlets near lakes where the Indians lived. At the time Muirheid was building the dam and mill near Webster, Willard Barbee, from Oswego, who was a partner with Ezekiel French, was building a dam at the outlet of Saw Mill lake which raised the level of several connected lakes, flooded much marshland and diverted the water around through Banning and Shoe lakes, across the low land to a point near Oswego where additional mills were located. More mills were established at the village of Chief Monoquet, on the Tippecanoe river just north of Warsaw. That settlement threatened to become a metropolis and soon had a flour mill, feed mill, tannery, woolen mill, saw mill, tavern — even a newspaper. Most of the Indians were unable to accustom themselves to the commerce that came with the mill villages.

Without the ability or inclination to be tradesmen or farmers they were left to pass their time hunting and fishing.

The Indians did not understand private ownership of land or livestock. Many of the first settlers came only because the new territory gave them their first opportunity to own land and try to make it support them. After the Indians were provided definite reservations, they were allowed to hunt and fish only on those limited areas. Even then farmers accused them of herding pigs or cows from the nearby farms on to their reservations where they were free to kill, dress and consume the animals. Probably the tribe most familiar with the Boydston settlers was led by Chief Musquabuck, a Potawatomi. He was said to be finest specimen of an Indian. He stood erect, weighed 180, and his handsome head was said to resemble Daniel Webster. There is evidence that his tribe encountered much hardship as it roamed around Tippecanoe lake and river. "Bone Prairie" near Leesburg was the scene of many battles and some severe epidemics which decimated their numbers and left bones and skulls to be exposed for many years by the farmers plow. The Musquabuck reservation contained only four sections of land. It was rumored that they were once deliberately infected with smallpox by resentful white farmers. Mass burying places indicate that the Indians died in great numbers at certain periods.

White settlers also endured extreme privation. Severe winter weather in 1838 caused the deaths of many of them from sheer exposure. Almost all of the survivors who were well enough, strong enough, or had money enough, fled back east and south to a more gentle environment. The survivors who remained were able to claim vast tracts of the best farm land. Many settlers had died during that cold winter from fever arising from the Miasma, a word used to describe the vapors generated by the decaying vegetation in the swamplands.

The Indian history of the lakes area of Kosciusko county remains vague in many respects. The tribes were not clearly separated and even the names of the chiefs were spelled several different ways. One fierce warrior named Benack lived near Clunette. He was supposed to have collected the tongues of 99 whites and small boys hurried past his cabin for fear of becoming number 100. His daughter Mary Ann, married an Irishman named Edward McCarty, who could speak with and interpret for the Indians. The marriage failed and she paid him one section of land to "get lost."

A young Frenchman named Dominique Rousseau might have been the first white to settle in Kosciusko county. He operated a trading post on the edge of Bone Prairie near present day Leesburg. He married the daughter of Chief Waubee (Wawasee) and the union benefitted his fur business. The pair had one daughter before the wife died at an early age. Alexis Coquillard, one of the pioneers of South Bend, raised the child. Little is known of the origin of Rousseau even though he bore a distinguished French name. Answers to questions pertaining to his private life were carried to his grave in the Leesburg cemetery where he was buried in 1845.

Pottawatomi Chief Musquabuck had four sons. Two of them were twins, named Macose and Mazette. Another son John, was quarrelsome and was killed in a fight near Leesburg. The youngest son Bill, was a favorite with whites. He was a student in the early school taught by Thomas K. Warner. An Indian agent named Ezekiel French of Oswego, represented the U. S. in transferring the Musquabuck tribe west in March 1836. They were paid $1 per acre, ($2,560) for their four sections of land. The old Chief was heartbroken at the prospective move and died after a fall from his horse. His son Bill, became the chief after they were settled west of the Mississippi.

Another Pottawatomi chief, Monoquet, had his reservations and village farther down the Tippecanoe river not far north of Warsaw. He died of a fever after a prolonged carousel with a pretty young visiting squaw from a Michigan tribe. As he grew ill his tribesmen blamed her for debauching and probably poisoning the old chief. She fled north before he died and was overtaken by two young braves. They brained her with a tomahawk at a crossroad south of Leesburg. Whites buried her under a large oak tree near what is now road #15 and the spot was long accepted by the early settlers as the place the young squaw perished. After Monoquet died his body was set erect in a pole pen together with his horse, dog and weapons. This was all covered with brush and forgotten until some whites burned the accumulated debris some years later.

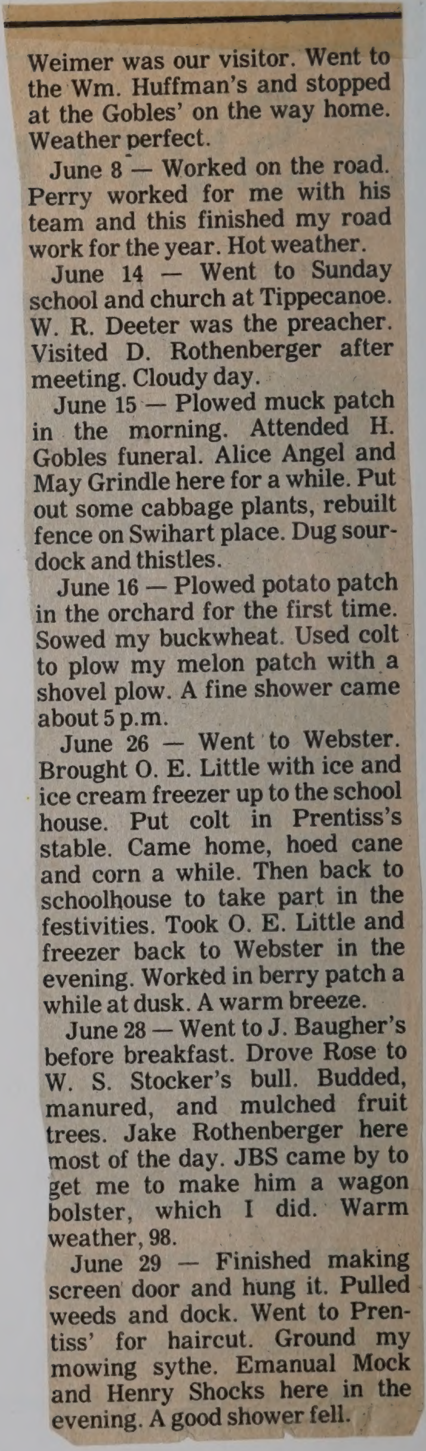
The Miamis were concentrated in the Flatbelly Reserve just north of Boydston's Pond as Webster lake was then called. This reserve contained 36 sections and extended over into Noble county. One of the Miami chiefs was often called Wabee and his name was at the mercy of the scribes who interpreted his spoken name. Sometimes it was written Waw-wa-esse, and often just plain Wawasee. For important events he wore a silver ring in his nose. On less important occasions he inserted a small fish bone through the cartilage of his nose. Papakeecha was problably the brother of Wabee. He liked to sign his name "Flatbelly" and was usually addressed by that name even though he was considered the fattest Indian ever seen in the Miami nation. He was a very important chief and was given a brick house for his residence at Indian Village. Soon after they ceded their land to the U. S. Wabee vanished and Papakeecha took to drink. He is said to have drowned in the lake that bears his name while trying to perform an Indian dance in his canoe.

Where the Elkhart river flows into the St. Joseph river, there was a small island shaped like the shape of an Elk heart. Hence the name of the county and the town of Elkhart.

The Tippecanoe river was long considered the cleanest stream in all of Indiana. Somehow that name is translated from the Pottawatomi language to mean "place of buffalo fish." There were temporary encampments along every stream and lake. It was necessary to move these tiny villages frequently for reasons of sanitation. Probably fewer than 700 Indians lived in the entire county and most of them lived near the water for the same sewage disposal motive that prompts their white brothers to concentrate their home on the streams and lakes today. If the long departed Indians could know the quantities of sewage we dump into their sparkling waters these days they would never rest comfortably in their "happy hunting ground."

Chapter 3

Politics



Weimer was our visitor. Went to the Wm. Huffman's and stopped at the Gobles' on the way home. Weather perfect.

June 8 — Worked on the road. Perry worked for me with his team and this finished my road work for the year. Hot weather.

June 14 — Went to Sunday school and church at Tippecanoe. W. R. Deeter was the preacher. Visited D. Rothenberger after meeting. Cloudy day.

June 15 — Plowed muck patch in the morning. Attended H. Gobles funeral. Alice Angel and May Grindle here for a while. Put out some cabbage plants, rebuilt fence on Swihart place. Dug sourdock and thistles.

June 16 — Plowed potato patch in the orchard for the first time. Sowed my buckwheat. Used colt to plow my melon patch with a shovel plow. A fine shower came about 5 p.m.

June 26 — Went to Webster. Brought O. E. Little with ice and ice cream freezer up to the school house. Put colt in Prentiss's stable. Came home, hoed cane and corn a while. Then back to schoolhouse to take part in the festivities. Took O. E. Little and freezer back to Webster in the evening. Worked in berry patch a while at dusk. A warm breeze.

June 28 — Went to J. Baugher's before breakfast. Drove Rose to W. S. Stocker's bull. Budded, manured, and mulched fruit trees. Jake Rothenberger here most of the day. JBS came by to get me to make him a wagon bolster, which I did. Warm weather, 98.

June 29 — Finished making screen door and hung it. Pulled weeds and dock. Went to Prentiss' for haircut. Ground my mowing sythe. Emanual Mock and Henry Shocks here in the evening. A good shower fell.

Politics

Around North Webster

This chapter will interest few readers, because most people have little interest in governing themselves. This is indicated at every election when scarcely half of the adult citizens bother to register, and less than half of those find time or energy to vote. This condition is clearly evident when candidates are selected as a result of the voting (or the lack of it) in the Primary elections held in May whenever the year has an even number.

Tippecanoe township, like much of rural Indiana, has a long history of Whig-Republican tradition. Early settlers in the township were fiercely independent and held fast to the idea that the "Least governed were the best governed." Until the end of World War II there was some truth in the anecdote about the father taking his small children down to the postoffice to show them a "real live Democrat." Postmasters were appointed by the President who was very often a Democrat. Since the influx of new residents after that War, there has been no shortage of members of that party.

Tippecanoe township was situated in the land between the Pottowatomies and the Miamis. When the railroads were built it was in between the Pennsylvania and the B. & O. After that we again found ourselves in between the more populous Republican strongholds of Warsaw and Syracuse.

In the fall election of 1860, Abe Lincoln and the new Republican party won the township by a 2 to 1 margin. In 1864, Lincoln won over McLellan, 145 to 71. In 1868, Grant was the winner over Seymour, 145 to 72. 1872 found the Republican gaining 12 new voters as Grant won over Greeley 157 to 51. Local candidates knew each voter and made every effort to gain his support. Almost every male over 21 voted and considered himself a "citizen" instead of just a "resident." In 1848 George Weaver was elected County Commissioner from the northern district and Tippecanoe township has not had many since then. Two who come to mind are A. B. Warner and Bill Dorsey.

It is interesting to consider that voters who had a prudent attitude usually voted Democrat (the well established party) while the adventursome progressives voted Republican. The early settlers knew the axiom that "the timid never started and the weak died on the way." This bold majority even favored the abolition of slavery. Pupils in the one room rural schools were encouraged to think about their government and the candidates. It was strongly suggested that a good citizen should vote for what "is best for the country" rather than what is best for himself.

Not every student completed the grades taught in the one room schools. Every graduate had learned to read, write and "figure." Spelling bees and "ciphering" contests were high points in the short school year and the finalists were held in great esteem.

Jasper Angel was the trustee of Tippecanoe township before the turn of the century. He was personally "allowed" $25 per year salary for the administration of ten individual schools. He was also a nurseryman, carpenter, farmer and a pillar in his church and community. He lived north of Webster lake and frequently walked to Warsaw to take care of school business, assessing, etc. Some excerpts from his carefully kept, hand written diary will explain the life of a politician almost 90 years ago. Dog-eared and in pencil, it reads as follows:

Jan. 7, 1889— Got up at 2 a.m., started for Warsaw at 3. Walking that entire distance. Took my place in the jury box, the first case being that of a Mr. Price charged with insanity. 2nd case being State of Indiana vs. Wm. Macelroy for assault and battery on one W. St. Clair, brought from Wabash county. Rained until daylight.

Jan. 9— In the jury box all day. Bargained with Uncle Phebus for lodging and breakfast, most of the time while on the jury. Weather froze.

Jan. 22— In the jury box in a.m. and in the jury room in p.m. Settled the road case from Milford. Established the new road and allowed Phillips $300 damages for depriving him of the old road. Have stomach ache and something like the colic. Weather cold and windy.

Jan. 23— At Phebus' 'til noon, being excused until then. Went to the Court house and found the Bockman-Ketring case going on. It was decided about 7 p.m. in favor of Bockman. Weather very cold.

Jan. 24— Took my place in the jury box at nine but the Judge found that there was no case on the docket that could be tried at present. He discharged us all. Drew my pay, $38.20, and settled my board bill. Met Mr. Bixler and rode with him as far as his place, then walked on home. Found Eva Rawlson here. Barely thawed and windy.

Friday 1/25/'89— JBS came here and he and I went to see NJM about our new road. JBS gave him official notice to see that Wyland gets his fence out of the road. F. & S. Swihart and J. Hamman here in the evening. Barely warm enough to thaw.

Sat. 1/26— Split wood all day. Went over to Dad's, paid him $4 and also paid Prentiss $2. Jess Hamman here on his way to meeting at Burketts. Will went along with him. The Wm. Hoffmans stopped a few minutes at the gate this afternoon.

Sun. 1/27— Attended meeting at Burketts. Took dinner there, 21 persons by actual count. Misty and beginning to thaw.

Mon. 1/28 —Sodded the yard at front door. Trimmed grape vines and split wood. D. Garber and E. Miller here in the morning. Wife went to Webster with Hamman & Jarrett. Ground mostly thawed out.

Tues. 1/29— Prentiss here nearly all day. We visited in the evening. Burketts and Swihart came after help for aid to cow calving. I got home about ten o'clock. Weather magnificent.

Thurs. 1/31— Went to Prentiss' in the morning, then to John's to stay 'til noon and cut his hair. Finished trimming raspberries. Went to Burketts to get Eva to do our housework 'til wife gets over the "grip." Found that she is engaged for this week at D. Rothenbergers. S. Swihart came in evening to have his hair cut. Most magnificent weather!

2/1/'89— Finished shucking corn, the last 7 shocks. Carried it to the crib. Began repairing a chair for H. P. Sillia Angell here. Fine weather.

Feb. 2— Finished P's chair in AM. Went to Webster in the PM. Bought a pair of pants for $1. Got Storrs & Harrison's colt. John Kline here. Reub Guy here in evening. Weather delightful.

Feb. 3— Went to Webster to mail a letter to cousin SAS. Also one to Green's nursery for agents outfit. Worked on a mall. Prentiss here in p.m. Wife went to Grindles. I had a toothache. Weather is misty.

Feb. 4— Went to J. Baugher to get timothy seed I had left in his drill. When I came back I found J. Burketts here. I made him a handle. I painted some fence posts. Visited D. Hammans in evening. Boy went to church at Weimers in the evening. Mercury 63 at sundown.

Feb. 5— Visited Wm. Angel's. Wife and Mary Grindle rode down in buggy. I walked. A little rain.

Feb. 6— Tore down some fence and went to Grindles to see about going to Warsaw. Prentiss' wife here all day. He came in the PM to get saw fixed. Drove fence posts for me while I fixed his saw. Boy went to church in evening. Weather continues raw.

Feb 7— Attended a school meeting in the schoolhouse in Webster in the evening. Snowed about 4 inches.

Feb. 8— Repaired one of Anna's shoes in the morning. Attended council meeting at Tippecanoe church. Drove some fence posts in afternoon. Ground still frozen.

Feb. 14— Went to Webster in morning, mailed 2 letters. From there went church at Tippecanoe, after which I came home and studied nursery business. Prentiss and Ira Rothenberger here. Will went to Burketts to lodge at night. Drizzly all day.

Feb. 17— Went to mill at Webster, saw B. Yohn. Attended church at Tippecanoe. Weather delightful.

Feb. 18— D. Hamman here for his saw. Prentiss here to get his saw rigged. D. H. and I went to church and came home for lunch. Later I fixed fence around the place and went to meeting in the eve. Turning colder.

Feb. 19— Stayed home studying up on nursery business. Polly A. here. I split wood there was in the wood-pile. D. J. Bixel and Wm. Fidler stayed overnight here. Blustery and misted some.

Feb. 25— Rigged Burkett's saw. Made a start at canvassing for nursery stock. E. Miller and E. H. Upson here. Showery.

Mar. 2— Nothing of importance transpired. Boy went to Hamman's. I had a toothache. Face swelled out of all recognition. Mercury down to 11.

Mar. 4— Still at home. Wife brought me a bottle of Magic Linament from Brother Bills in Webster yesterday evening. This enabled me to get a good rest last night and gave me ease today. Kept indoors. Blustery.

Mar. 6— At home all day. Finally did some work. Split and chopped some wood. Ellen Burkett here for dinner. J. Angel here for a bushel of clover seed. Ground thawed some.

Mar. 10— Went out canvassing for nursery stock, and hunting for clover seed. Found it at Frank Morehead's. Bought a bushel and engaged more for Pa and Burkett.

Mar. 22— Isaiah Kuhn and J. Mock here. Also Perry and John Angel, Roy Rawlson, Frank and Sam Swihart were all here in the evening. Ale Scott too.

Mar. 25— Canvassed for nursery. Brought up in Webster in the evening. Attended a temperance meeting. Stayed overnight with John Bockman. Weather is delightful and the frogs are hollering!

Apr. 8— Attended election. I was elected Township Trustee. Majority 25. A great deal of strife in the party kept quite a number of Republicans away from the polls. Stayed in Webster until the votes were counted. Helped treat to the candy. Got home at midnight. Weather fine.

Apr. 10— Chored around. Put up posts for grape trellis. Opened turnip and potato hole. Took 2 bushels of potatoes to Mr. Wood. Also some cabbages. Esther Miller and boy Willie came up from Nappanee. Blustery day.

Apr. 12— Went to Burketts to meet J. Mock on land dikker. Beautiful day!

Apr. 13— Mrs. Miller and my wife left for Burketts at 10 am. Contracted for the Millers' share of the S place. Consideration $800. Prentiss plowed for me. I repaired fence on S place. Weather delightful.

Apr. 20— Prentiss and I built fence. Attended a caucus at Webster. Party strife is diminishing, but much talk about anti-trust laws and about Harrison, McKinley and free trade and the price of silver. Weather quite cool.

Apr. 22— Went to Warsaw. Paid tax. Borrowed money for land purchase. Got home at 11 pm. Weather very fine.

Apr. 29— Went to Webster with Esther and Jake Miller. They made a deed to me for their share of the Swirart place. Consideration $800. Home at 1 pm. and planted 250 Raspberry sets. Went to Stockers for 75 Wilson Black raspberry sets. Good spring weather.

Apr. 30— Went to Webster and served on the election board. Plowed for Pa. Heard first Whiporwill! Threat of rain in evening.

May 11— Went to meeting house. Met George Mock and Ira Mock there. We are appointed a committee to estimate the cost and devise a plan to remodel the church. Weather showery and chilly.

May 19— Went to meeting house to attend Sunday school, but on account of rain and so few there it was called off. D. Rothenberger and I started for Mocks corners to attend church, but on account of the bridge being out at Ben Yohn's we could not get there. Still drizzly.

May 20— Planted sorghum. Went to Webster. Canvassed for funds with which to repair Tippecanoe church house. Rained most of the day.

May 24— Planted some melons and squashes in am. The most terrific rainstorm came up about 3 o'clock. Washing corn down and out. Blowing fences down and playing hob in general. Took 'til night laying rail fence back up.

May 30— Went to S. P. Overstreets in am. Attended Decoration Day exercise in pm with Hiram Mock and Jim Stocker. Weather just right.

June 7— Went to Sunday school, then church. Cyrus Weimer was our visitor. Went to the Wm. Huffman's and stopped at the Gobles' on the way home. Weather perfect.

June 8— Worked on the road. Perry worked for me with his team and this finished my road work for the year. Hot weather.

June 14— Went to Sunday school and church at Tippecanoe. W. R. Deeter was the Preacher. Visited D. Rothenberger after meeting. Cloudy day.

June 15— Plowed muck patch in the morning. Attended H. Gobles funeral. Alice Angel and May Grindle here for a while. Put out some cabbage plants, rebuilt fence on Swihart place. Dug sour-dock and thistles.

June 16— Plowed potato patch in the orchard for the first time. Sowed my buckwheat. Used colt to plow my melon patch with a shovel plow. A fine shower came about 5 pm.

June 26— Went to Webster. Brought O. E. Little with ice and ice cream freezer up to the school house. Put colt in Prentiss's stable. Came home, hoed cane and corn a while. Then back to schoolhouse to take part in the festivities. Took O. E. Little and freezer back to Webster in the evening. Worked in berry patch a while at dusk. A warm breeze.

June 28— Went to J. Baugher's before breakfast. Drove Rose to W. S. Stocker's bull. Budded, manured, and mulched fruit trees. Jake Rothenberger here most of the day. JBS came by to get me to make him a wagon bolster, which I did. Warm weather 98.

June 29— Finished making screen door and hung it. Pulled weeds and dock. Went to Prentiss' for haircut. Ground my mowing sythe. Emanual Mock and Henry Shocks here in the evening. A good shower fell.

July 2— Helped Parry harvest wheat on the Swihart place. Used a binder. We all went to a show in Webster in evening. Light shower.

July 10— Mowed the grass in the orchard. Repaired the barn and went to Webster later to attend a Republican meeting and get flour.

July 21— Went to Warsaw. Filed my Trustee bond. Got my Miller deed recorded and renewed my note at the bank. A nice little rain.

July 26— Went to Parry's to get prospecting auger and bored for water in N. E. corner of the yard. Put cook-stove out in the smokehouse. Returned auger. Repaired roof on house. Wife and I went fishing. No rain.

Aug. 2— Cradled oats for about 2 hours in a.m. Finished haying for this year. Ben Greider here to trade a mare colt for cow. Bad weather.

Aug. 3— Attended church at Tippecanoe house. Went to old Mr. Buckman's funeral in afternoon. Frank Swiharts came home with us.

Aug. 5— Went to P. Arnold to get township records library and brought them home with me. Fixed pump and prepared for threshing in afternoon.

Aug. 8— My first Office day in Webster. Wife helped Mrs. Hamman cook for threshers. A Mr. C. H. Guild, agent for the Teachers Anatomical Aid was here overnight.

Aug. 11— Jakes Himes here before breakfast. Wes Weimer stopped in. C. H. Guild left at noon. Threshed in afternoon then went to Ben Yohn's, then back to Webster and on home. Jake Himes came back to contract for teaching School #1.

Aug. 12— Went to S. Eagles to look at some horses. Lifted a note for $21 held by him. Went to R. F. Koher's sale. Bought a horse for $28 and a plow for $1. Went to Jake Mock's, negotiated with him for a buggy and harness.

Aug. 13— Helped thresh at D. Rothenbergers. Wife went fishing. C. Weimer, J. Mock and John Miel here in evening. Rained a little.

Aug. 14— Will and I drove Rose over to Stocker's bull. I went over to Swihart place with my new horse to get clover seed. Insured the new schoolhouse this morning. S. D. Junkin and Mr. Ferrell, agents.

Aug. 15— Raked up clover seed in am. Wife and Ellen B. went to Vawters Park in afternoon. C. H. Guild came this afternoon.

Aug. 16— Went to Webster with Mr. Guild for a day at school office. Wife came down in buggy to take me home. E. H. Upson and wife came over.

Aug. 17— Went to School #8, then to Webster, then to School #4. Fred Greider here in pm. John Cable and Clara Blackman, agents for school maps and charts here. I ordered some for each school. Drizzly.

Aug. 19— Went to Warsaw, bought a suit of clothes, got township funds to pay for furniture for School #4. Jesse Hamman here in evening.

Aug. 20— Attended an official German Baptist meeting at the Tippecanoe church house. S. D. Junkin here and I ordered 5 reading charts from him. I'm afflicted with terrible diarrhea. In bed part of pm.

Aug. 22— Diarrhea starting to abate after the most violent of my recollection. Ate some toast twice today. (Good rain in the evening).

Aug. 23— Diarrhea almost finished. Worked half of the day for the Township. Wife went to Vawters Park and Webster. W. Hover, Jess Hamman and Ed Plew here in evening to make a complaint about dogs killing sheep.

Aug. 25— Went to see JWG about buying harness. Worked on furniture in School #1. Geo. Mock and I on the annual visit. Stayed with Geo. Angel overnight. (Rained plenty).

Aug. 26— Annual visits in the am. Went to Webster looking after school. Met with old trustee. Got an oil can, filled it with oil, got my mail and came home at dusk. Ate supper and threw it up immediately.

Sept. 1— Went to Warsaw to attend Organization of School Board and County Institute.

Sept. 6— Went to Warsaw to report school book business and attend Co.

Institute. S. D. Junkin rode home with me. Could not thresh clover seed. (Too much rain).

Sept. 7— Got W. S. Angel with team to go to School #8 and haul slate black board to new school house. Visited aunt Anna Guy and Rebecca. (Rain in pm).

Sept. 8— O. E. Little, W. Jarrett and Jess Hamman here to see me in am. Bought 2 pigs from J. Baugher. Plowed for wheat. Milt Baker here for dinner. Misty.

Sept. 10— Went to Cromwell in am . Took 30 melons along. Went to Webster in pm. Took 26 melons. Both lots brought $15.65. Accepted new school house for the township. Finished plowing at nine pm.

Sept. 12— Went to Ligonier in am and sold my clover seed. Was at fairground for 2 hours. Went to School #6. Peter Rotter and I went to James Stoner's to get our sorghum molasses. Wm. Jarrett and Frank Swihart here in eve.

Sept. 22— Attended church at Oak Grove forenoon and afternoon. Cloudy, misty, windy and chilly. Bought wagon of P. Beightol. Ira Rothenberger here in eve.

Sept. 23— Went to meeting house to help arrange for the communion. E. H. Upson, J. Kuhn, Mary Bush and Swihart kids went with us to Burketts where we all had ice cream.

Sept. 24— Removed school furniture from School #9 to new schoolhouse. Borrowed J. Baugher's seeder. Sowed timothy until rain started. Chopped out two axe handles and filed a new saw. Rained about 2 pm.

Oct. 1— Hitched to wagon, went over to new school and put together school desks with J. H. Mock. Checked school business in afternoon. Rained some.

Oct. 3— Attended funeral for A. Pontius. Went to Webster and took Parry Baker to poor house.

Oct. 6— Hauled rails in morning. Raised our fence one rail higher. Wife and I went to Cromwell, spent night 'til 1 a.m. with Albert Stocker. Boarded train for Chicago.

Oct. 7— Arrived in Chicago about 7 am, spent the next three days in Chicago.

Oct. 10— Boarded train for home at 9 a.m. Arrived at Cromwell at noon. Got home about 2 p.m. and went to Webster.

Oct. 12— Wife and I to Webster in am., thence to Tippecanoe church house for council meeting. Back to Webster for the speech by Royce, home about midnight.

Oct. 13— Made out statistics for school. Negotiated for school furniture. The agent of the Grand Rapids School Furniture Co. is here. Mel Kyle, James Stoner, C. Weimer and Millie Janis here in eve. Rained hard.

Oct. 14— Went to Warsaw with Wm. Stocker. He as administrator for Pontius estate and I as witness on the will. Had some school business with the superintendent.

Oct. 16— Wm. Stocker, Ephriam Brumbaugh and I appraised the A. Pontius property. Rained most of the day.

Oct. 18— Attended the funeral of Jesse Beightel. Threshed my buckwheat.

Oct. 20— Went to church. Mary Grindle and Mary Angel were baptised to the German Baptist Church.

Oct. 22— Worked for township in am. Prentiss and I made clapboards. Went to Cromwell to get shingles, door and a window. Installed them. Went to Burkett's doctoring his old mare about 3 pm. Went over again in the evening. Mare got to eating again.

Oct. 24— Finished 2 days work at carpentry for Burkett. Also made him an axe-handle. He paid me off. Rain has let up.

Oct. 28— Wes Weimer here in am. Dug sweet potatoes, hauled 2 loads of wood, and dug a bushel of white potatoes. Wife and boy took cabbages to O. E. Lyttle and J. O. Wood.

Oct. 29— Went to Webster, thence to J. Jarretts, thence to School #4, thence to School #5, thence home. Took dinner and went to Webster with wife to hear speech by Billy Williams. Started to rain in the evening.

Oct. 30— Went to Cromwell, brought home stoves, put them partly together. Sold a calf to a Mrs. Mulenhour of Cromwell, $4. Buried potatoes. Rainy.

Nov. 1— Went to Warsaw. Brought back tickets for coming election. Sent draft to Hess Stove Co. for stoves. Attended meeting in Webster in evening.

Nov. 3— Set up stoves. Went to Webster to prepare for election.

Nov. 5— Got through with election about 3 this morning. Rode home with Wm. Stocker. Set up stove in School #4. Took election returns to Warsaw. J. Jarrett went with me. Got W. Angel to bring out school books.

Nov. 7— Canvassing Board got through about 3 this morning. Jarrett and I started for Webster and arrived at daylight. Office day in Webster. Township Institute today. Rainy day.

Nov. 12— Clerked sale at Pontius today. Bought 2 jugs, 5 benches and a table. Two old iron buyers here overnight.

Nov. 13— Visited schools, delivered charts. Went to Stockers to settle up Pontius sale. Put red cow to the bull.

Nov. 18— Dan Miller here this a.m. Cut Sam Swihart's hair, made a hog pen. Oliver Davis and I went to Webster in the evening. Rainy.

Nov. 21— I learned this a.m. that school furniture was in Leesbug. Got Prentiss with my team and Perry with his team to go after it. Took stove along to Bockman's hall where I set it up.

Nov. 23— Office day in Webster. Set up desks in Webster school, put some in Beightel's new room. Got ready for 2 schools for Monday.

Nov. 25— Made arrangements for repairing church meeting house. Staked off berry patch for crabapple trees. Bought 2 hogs from D. Hamman. Mrs. Guys, the Baugher girls, and Wm. Jarrett here in eve.

Nov. 26— Butchered today. Prentiss, wife and Mrs. Hamman helped me. S. P. Overstreet here for dinner. O. F. Gerard here in evening. Snowy.

Nov. 30— Spent morning in Webster at School #4. Joe Grindle, Mr. and Mrs. Hamman, Mrs. Pointius, Eva Rawlsen, Ale Scott, and Sarah Swihart here. Began snowing in p.m.

Dec. 1— Planted crab apple and transplanted apple trees. Fixed cellar for winter, salted my meat in a.m. Worked and arranged for stabling all of my stock. Coldest day yet.

Dec. 2— Made firewood and put handle in my new axe. L. Sechrist here to buy chickens. Took $5.70 worth. Took 2 bushels of buckwheat to Yohn's mill. Weather bordering on the horrible.

Dec. 3— Went to Warsaw after school books and to settle election expenses. Too cold for thawing.

Dec. 4— Went to Webster in morning with J. Miller, thence to Ben Yohn's, thence to see N. Reche, thence to Ellen Starners, thence home. Two of Wyland's boys here for school books. Thawed a little.

Dec. 6— Office day in Webster. Wife and Anna came down in buggy in the evening. Got pair of felt boots for boy and Anna a pair of shoes. Thawed considerable.

Dec. 7— Attended church at Tippecanoe church house. Took dinner with Dan Mocks, then went to the J. Fancil's funeral at Mocks corners. Stopped at B. Snokes on the way back. Wife and I went to evening church at Tippecanoe house. Bright day.

Dec. 8— D. Hamman, Wm. Jarrett and Leslie Miller here. Went to School #4 to see about stove and to visit school. Went to Webster after recess. Wife visited brother Bill. Fair weather.

Dec. 9— Rigged a saw for business. Sawed some wood in the forenoon. Bro. Bill, Ed Kirkendall and Joe Grindle and I went over to the Swihart place to look at timber. Agreed to let them have a patch for wood. Killed a rabbit.

Dec. 10— A. W. Bothel and F. Hall here in the morning. Went with them to show where to clear for the wood. Spent the afternoon blazing timber. A most delightful day.

Dec. 12— Went to Webster looking after corn. Did not buy any. Hauled some straw on potato holes, 2 loads from Swihart barn. Wife helped me.

Dec. 15— Visited Aunt Anna Guy. J. Whitehead there. Wife and Sam Miller went over to Burketts in the evening. Weather cold but otherwise fine for Sunday.

Dec. 16— Went to Ligonier. Bought ton of coal for Hess school heaters. Delivered it to the schools and bought 15 bushels of corn of J. Kline. Wife has sick headache. Snowed nearly all day, but melted nearly as fast as it fell.

Notes Taken From The 1890 County Commissioners Reports

Sept. 10, 1890— Allowances made and to whom: Henry Whelan, 500 brick for Poor Farm, $3.25. E. J. McAlpine, salary as County Superintendent for past year, $314.40. A. C. Funk, salary as County Auditor for past year as per Indiana Statute, $401.25. John F. Sloan, altering 36 male pigs at Poor Farm, $1.35. S. D. Webb, medicine for prisoners in county jail for year, 60c. Fred Mills, hauling load of rubbish from court house, 25c. Dog permits varied from 25c for a male dog in Etna Green to $2.00 for a female in Syracuse. (Webster was not listed but Milford Junction was then included as an incorporated village.) Tippecanoe township was allowed $15 to pay Dr. S. B. Junkin for furnishing medicines and surgical treatment for the poor. R. S. Smith was allowed, for burying the poor of the county for the year, $27.00. Signed by: Austin C. Funk, Auditor, Ephriam Wells, Jacob Weimer, and James W. Hoover, Comm. Last item on the list of expenditures for fiscal 1890: Burial for dead soldiers, $174.

Postmasters in Tippecanoe Township

Office established as "Boydston's Mills" on June 14, 1849. Name changed to "North Webster" on August 19, 1879.

Postmasters	Date of appointment	by President	
Thomas G. Boydston	June 14, 1848	James K.Polk	(Dem)
Benjamin Yohn	February 6, 1850	Zachary Taylor	(Whig)
Abram Deardorff	November 23, 1853	Franklin Pierce	(Dem)
George W. Eckman	April 23, 1858	James Buchanan	(Dem)
James W. Scott	January 15, 1861	James Buchanan	(Dem)
Jonas Jarrett	September 5, 1861	Abraham Lincoln	(Rep)
Eli Beghtel	April 14, 1862	Abraham Lincoln	(Rep)
Benjamin Yohn	January 18, 1865	Abraham Lincoln	(Rep)
John F. Bockman	August 19, 1879	Rutherford Hayes	(Rep.)
John A. Ketring	October 21, 1885	Grover Cleveland	(Dem)
John J. Ogle	March 6, 1889	Benj Harrison	(Rep)
John A. Mock	May 18, 1889	Benj Harrison	(Rep)
Jacob Dullinger	August 16, 1893	Grover Cleveland	(Dem)
Orlando F. Gerard	May 26, 1896	Grover Cleveland	(Dem)
George W. Stoner	August 14, 1901	Wm. McKinley	(Rep)
Orlanda F. Gerard	November 2, 1901	Teddy Roosevelt	(Rep)
Vernon M. Junken	May 16, 1902	Teddy Roosevelt	(Rep)
David N. Kyle	August 11, 1903	Teddy Roosevelt	(Rep)
Anna M. Bowen (Declined)	May 5, 1905	Teddy Roosevelt	(Rep)
Allen C. Scott	August 18, 1905	Teddy Roosevelt	(Rep)
Jefferson Garber	October 7, 1908	Teddy Roosevelt	(Rep)

He served until "modern" times, office was in his General Store until 1930.

The preceding list of Postmasters leaves much to be desired as an aid to recording political history. It is apparent that the office was first established at the mill house as the most convenient gathering place. As the village of "Webster" became the population center it was decided to move the Post Office to that location. Eli Bechtel was appointed in 1862 to be the first postmaster there but the operation was doomed because of the existence of another "Webster," so the location was changed back to the Mill and Benjamin Yohn, the miller, was once again the postmaster.

In the early days of the post office department it was required that postmasters pinpoint the location of their offices. In 1865 Benjamin Yohn responded to the Topographer Department and located the Boydston's Mills office as being in the northwest quarter of Section 14 about 10 rods north of the Tippecanoe River. The nearest post office to the west was Oswego, 6½ miles by the traveled road, while Syracuse was 8½ miles to the northwest and Wilmot was 5 miles east. "Pearston" was 8 miles south on the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne & Chicago railroad and "Ligonier" was 12 miles north east on the Northern Indiana Airline Railroad. Warsaw, 12 miles south west was the "County Town" and "Leesburgh" was 8½ miles west.

In 1879, it was decided to name the post office "North Webster" even though the village plat was still recorded as "Webster." John F. Bockman was appointed postmaster August 19, 1879 and the mail was no longer confused with that destined to "Webster" Indiana.

Jefferson Garber had a general store in the town which was a good location for a post office, so he was appointed postmaster on October 7, 1908. He was popularly known as Jeff Garber and he served longer than any other postmaster. His store later became known as the Garber and Phelps store and the post office brought almost every resident there daily.

Probably the best known politician in Tippecanoe townhsip was Earl Himes. He was a school teacher, Republican county chairman, Kosciusko county Auditor, precinct committeeman, convention delegate and finally postmaster. He probably knew more people in the township than any other individual. Earl suggested calling North Webster "The Friendly Little City." Very few stopped in the village who did not get acquainted with him. Huber Earl Himes was born in April 1894 and died in April 1968.

Chapter 4

Banking

Banking in North Webster

Farmers State Bank was chartered in 1916 with a capital of $25,000. Albert Garber was the president, Sam Miller, vice president, James Rule, cashier. Directors were Arthur Johnson, Grant Bause, A. B. Warner, Joseph P. Weimer, John Baugher and Randolph Allison. The building was erected over the site of the burned-out Mid-Lakes Hotel which had been operated by A. B. Warner. Long before anyone had thought of a "Full Service Bank" the Farmers State Bank furnished a wide and unusual variety of services.

Many of the customers took their vacations in the wintertime. It was common practice to "deposit" their fern plants in the bank where the employees would water and give them proper attention until their owners returned and "withdrew" them. The vault and the basement served as a depository for silver-ware, mint, canned goods, sweet potatoes and almost anything that needed security, attention and frost-free storage.

A bank robbery occured during the 1930s when the economic gloom seemed endless. The villagers and especially the regular local loafers had observed an "outsider" loitering around the bank. There was no restroom in the bank at that time and the lone employee on the first floor had gone across the street to answer nature's call. The stranger slipped in the side door, scooped up some money and raced out the front door. This was before "the government" took care of the populace, there was no F.D.I.C. so the local citizens quickly took up the chase. Earl Gerard overtook to robber in the cemetery where he held a shotgun on him until more help arrived. The inept robber was persuaded to march back to the bank, return the money, and await the coming of the Sheriff. Twenty five years later the writer asked Mr. Gerard, who was almost always called "Peck," why he would get involved in the risk of capturing a bank robber? His answer was simple, direct and loaded with logic. "I had some money in that bank." He operated a Standard Oil station for several years, was a skilled mechanic, craftsman, carpenter and mason. He was never able to learn to loaf.

After the end of World War II, the bank experienced 25 years of rapid expansion under the direction of J. Homer Shoop, and in 1972 the name was changed to the "Counting House Bank." In 1974, both Lake City Bank of Warsaw, and Warsaw Federal Savings & Loan opened branches in North Webster.

Chapter 5

People

Reflections . . .

The three following chapters, People, Places and Things, contain excerpts selected from "Lakeland Reflections." The Warsaw Times-Union printed this column for several years and parts were chosen which describe local history or sociology. Dates of printing are included.

Lakeland villages were similar to small towns all over the country. During the years between the first and second World Wars they were influenced by summer visitors. Some of these returned to become permanent residents, but most left after Labor Day and local "characters" again took up the occupation of entertaining the local loafers and each other. Each town had one or two favorite gathering spots. Quite often they would be located in front of the general store, the post office, or, at train time, the railroad station. Tall tales flew thick and fast as the travellers and the "train watchers" exchanged spicy stories about life in the far away big cities. A bench was sometimes provided and it was commonly called the "liars bench."

Contests and performances came in endless variety. Who could do the most "push-ups," spit the farthest or most accurately, "Indian-Wrestle," whittle or whistle, the best was part of the home town entertainment. One lakeland village had a man who could name the book, chapter, and verse, of any quotation from the Bible. He was almost as skillful when he was drunk as when he was sober, and much more likely to accept the challenges. Another famous "character" type was a man who demonstrated several talents at once, in the following order: he could stuff three fresh packages of Mail-pouch tobacco in his mouth, lean forward and pick up off the sidewalk a bottle of beer with his teeth (no hands) and hold his head back to drink the entire contents without stopping. New spectators were allowed to buy the chewing tobacco and the beer. He was larger than most men and weighed upwards of 300 pounds. He had one thing in common with all the other participants in this type of rural sport. He never intentionally hurt anyone.

Maude Willis . . .

August 7, 1971

Maude Willis is remembered by many lakelanders for her wit and willingness as she provided entertainment for club and school meetings of all sorts. She volunteered for these skits until she was a very old lady and few of the people who saw and heard her knew that she had been one of the genuine stars of the Chautauqua circuit. When she was a pert red-haired first grader in a one-room school in North Webster she often deliberately caused enough confusion to incurr punishment. The guilty one was asked to stand before the class and recite a poem, reading, or a speech. Maude loved to recite and gave evidence of talent. She was graduated from Northwestern school of oratory and was quickly appointed Dean of Oratory at the University of Southern California. The year of the Spanish American war (1898) she left California to lecture at teachers' institutes in Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. By this time she was 23 and far too busy, bright and brittle to consider marriage.

In 1907 she formed the Maude Willis Concert Co., made up of a violinist, harpist, and a pianist. Maude gave readings and was so popular that she had to disband and go on alone. She made her own bookings and soon was working the Chautauqua circuit in the larger cities as well as the "brown tops." This was the name given the tent shows that appeared in the small towns. Miss Willis performed in every state in the Union and in Canada. Bookings were often made a year in advance and she had a repertoire of 300 selections. She did not favor American involvement in World War I and some of her readings had to do with the moaning and groaning of war damaged soldiers.

Maude and her brother Henry Willis were members of a pioneer lakeland family. Their parents operated the mill at Boydston's (Webster) Lake and Willis' Park was named after them. They were of English descent and lived in an area that was populated chiefly by Germans except for a few Irish. One other pioneer family was English. They were the Warners and they were the early teachers, ministers and merchants of the North Webster area. Miss Willis died in 1957 when she was 82 and her trunks were still filled with elaborate costumes, gowns from Paris, programs and posters. These were quiet reminders of a life that is now described simply by the words— "They called it Culture."

Tom and John Crouch . . .

August 27, 1968

Tom and John Crouch were two gentlemen who drilled wells for many years in the lakeland area. They were spare, agile and very quiet workmen. Ordinary wordy people were always entranced while watching them put down a well. Using a wooden tripod, rope pulley and a weight they would work all day and speak not more than one word per hour to each other. Much co-operation was required to know when to drive, turn the pipe, tighten the pipe couplings, pour water in, pump some out, and a dozen other repeated operations, and all were done with hardly a word.

Lakers were captivated by watching them work, and asked them endless and often foolish questions. "Are you near water?" "How much clay is there?" "How thick is the vein?" The answer was almost always: "Don't know, you can't see down there."

The Barber Shop . . .

August 23, 1968

The barber shop was a very important meeting place in early Lakeland times. It must have been equally important in all rural towns. Very informal and sometimes accidental meetings at the barber shop determined who would be elected to local and often state offices. People were permitted much latitude of expression and shooting off of the mouth was commonplace. Listening around a barber shop would clearly reveal when the coach would be fired, when the minister should be replaced, where the fish were biting and on what bait.

Charlie Hall had the barber shop for many years in Webster. His shop was decorated with all the items which would intrigue the city rubes. The ceiling was thickly hung with hornets nests, the walls were covered with moose heads, arrow heads, fish and turtle heads. Rattle snake skins with rattlers, were mixed in with stuffed owls, foxes, and a badger.

A rack on the wall held the shaving mugs complete with brush, soap cake, and the customers name written on the side in gold script. Shaving was a ceremony which occurred at the same time every day for many local men, and it was a real privilege for a youngster to sit in one of the very comfortable waiting chairs, listen to the men talk, while looking at a "Police Gazette" which was several months old. The flourish of the very hot towel, the sound of the stropping of the blade, and the final wincing of the customer when he was slapped with the tingling lotion, added to the flavor of the conversation.

Hallie lost part of his hearing ability during his last years. He seemed to select the things he could not hear. You could tell him how to cut your hair and he almost always ignored such instruction. "I was cutting hair before he was born" was his familiar comment. The State health department required that most of the interesting paraphernalia be discarded during his later years and the barber shop lost much of its romance.

The sense of belonging to and being involved with the community must have filled a great void that is left today when everyone sits at home watching the shadows on a square box while some analyst in New York tells him what to think.

Gypsies . . .

August 9, 1968

This word resulted in some confusion when it appeared in a recent column, garbled between the writer, the proofreader and the typesetter. Groups loosely described as gypsies were an interesting part of the lakeland lore.

Merrill Bause, still residing in Webster, recalls an experience he had with one such group that always tried hard to be misunderstood. Merrill drove a "Huckster" wagon for Jeff Garber's store and his route took him through Kuhn's landing and on south past Dunham's school, the Menzie school, an overnight stay, and back to Webster the following day. He sold and traded staples to the farmers on his route in exchange for butter and eggs.

Once driving south past Perry's corner, he was warned to beware of a band of gypsies encamped just south, where the woods was dense on both sides of the road. He did encounter them strung across the road, ready to stop and talk with him while pilfering his goods.

By holding his whip and pistol in one hand, reins in the other, he was able to whip up the team and charge through the band shooting, yelling and shaking off a few pots and pans, enroute.

Everyone was convinced that the gypsies could tell your fortune, steal most anything, kidnap your children, and talk you out of, or beguile you into anything. Every summer, bands of them came by to encamp a while, frighten the youngsters and try to trade horses with the elders.

The livery stable was an enchanting place for every small town youngster to frequent. A wide assortment of horses and "rigs" were rented to visitors. Salesmen were called "drummers" and they needed these outfits to deliver and display their wares. So the livery stable was "where the action" was. As boys grew older they were sometimes allowed to sit around the lobbies of small town hotels and swap lies.

Fish and Festivals . . .

Conservation and Contests

June 19, 1968

These contrasting themes have blended since 1946 to create that spectacle of tradition called the Mermaid Festival. In order to get the lake business started as soon as the legal open fishing season began, Haakon Larsen and a group around North Webster, decided to try to have a Mermaid Festival.

Ordinarily village citizens will soon become ringmasters for a carnival week of activities which will be climaxed by a monster festival parade Saturday afternoon, June. 29. This week-long party has long since outgrown the skill, ability and just plain man and woman power of the North Webster community. Help shows up from the most unexpected sources. Everybody likes to watch a parade, and there are a few rare ones who are willing to "RUN" one. It is not easy to corral thousands of high spirited people into prearranged staging areas, and almost whip them with their cars, floats, instruments, and animals into the line of the parade at the proper moment. The feathers that are ruffled during the preparation and start are usually smoothed by the cheers and applause of thousands of friendly, sympathetic, happy fans filled with carnival spirit. It's fun for many local residents to look back at those first crude, stumbling efforts to make the festival a fun place.

The handful of Queen contestants stood on a flatbed farm wagon, borrowed from Bob Strombeck, and parked on a corner of the school yard. Amateur shows soon followed and a company offered to bring rides and shows for a percentage. Farm tractor pull contests kept the town awake late at night, many brought shovels to dig for buried treasure in a plot on the school grounds. Lots of township taxpayers and parents were not so happy about having the school yard used thus. The crowds grew so big on parade day that merchants complained that they could not do normal business at the very time the most people were in town. Townspeople were wary of the "carnies" and there was always a little talk about gypsies. Indiana did not like road 13 being closed. Church groups had large food tents and when it rained the food handlers were barefoot. There were power lines and extension cords everywhere. It was really about like RESSURECTION CITY only more fun. An early attraction was a tug of war across a channel.

As the parades and crowds grew it became a problem to get the kids peeled out of their thick wool band uniforms after many had fainted from heat and excitement. The first aid station was busiest on hot days. Some veteran Lion workers even got weary of lifting beautiful girls in long formals out of convertibles. It was becoming clear that more automation would be required. Every four years it is easy to get candidates for governor, except when a senatorial hopeful supercedes him, to crown the queen and ride in the parade.

June 12, 1970

In 1946 the first Mermaid Festival was held and every year since that time serious workers have considered whether it was time to stop all this foolishness that so disrupts the tempo of the small resort village of North Webster. After recovering from the hectic and busy week the community decides that it would be logical to conduct "just one more" festival. So the people from Webster and the surrounding lakeland area still volunteer to do the hard work, and the crowds still assume that "there will always be a festival."

Homer Shoop

The Mermaid Festival has survived, year after year, due largely to the support, hard work and the vision of J. Homer Shoop. People all over Indiana and beyond, have long recognized the name of the village, "North Webster," as the town with the Mermaid Festival. For many years this was due to the advertising, publicity releases, and novel ideas that sprang from this quiet man's "Mermaid Festival Think-Tank." His bank served as the mailing and telephone headquarters and often furnished the secretarial help required to maintain the spirit of the Festival.

After attending Kalamzoo College, Mr. Shoop had a brief stint at the age of 21, as manager of the Home State Bank of Lawrence, Michigan. His father Walter E. Shoop, managed the conversion of the Froehly Bank, a private bank in Pierceton, into what was to become the Pierceton State Bank. Due to his influence, Homer returned to Indiana and in 1947 became President of the Farmers State Bank of North Webster. His experience in the promotion of the Mermaid Festival prompted him to build a new bank building and name it the Counting House Bank. The theme, design and trappings were inspired by the Legend of King Arthur. The building has many unique features. Part of it is a museum of Sports figures, and on the roof is a full size tennis court. the area in front of it became "Camelot Square" and the building has evolved into the activity center of the community.

In addition to presiding over the vast growth of his bank, Homer Shoop has taken part in important tennis and bridge tournaments around the world.

June 20, 1969

"Oscar the Mouse" has become a very important factor in helping the Webster Lions pay the bills and buy the prizes for the festival. This little animal, with the aid of a roulette wheel, contrives to give away a lot of "Teddy bears" while collecting some dimes. An example of the psychology of inflation can be seen in the plans for Oscar for the coming summer. Nineteen hundred dollars worth of Teddy bears have been purchased for prizes for the mouse game. This game will be used at the festival and will follow a circuit of neighboring celebrations. These will include the Kosciusko County Fair, Old Settlers Day in Columbia City, the Firemans Fair in Syracuse and the Strawberry Valley Days at Ligonier. This busy summer for this busy little mouse, will keep a lot of the Lions just as busy all season.

Haakon Larsen

November 29, 1968

News of the death of Haakon K. Larsen, former North Webster resident, brings to mind several interesting facts about him and his father. Many lakelanders will remember that "H.K." had the initial concept of the Mermaid Festival, was the originator of the Webster shopping center, and operated several businesses around the area for several years. Less well known to younger and newer residents, is the story of his father, who was also a colorful individual.

Ingvar Larsen was born in Oslo, Norway in 1883, the youngest of eight children. At the age of 14, he shipped out on a whaling vessel and made his first trip to the United States. When he was 20 he was in London and was engaged by Leigh Hunt as private secretary and companion. Mr. Hunt was a native of Columbia City and had enterprises scattered around the world. He was best known for his mining companies in Asia, and had farming interests around the Wilmot-Etna area here in Indiana.

As secretary to Mr. Hunt, Ingvar Larsen made regular trips between Korea, England, Germany, France, Italy, Egypt and America. He crossed the Atlantic 27 times and like his employer, was able to speak and write effectively in several languages. In 1907 he married Salome (Loma) Weaver, daughter of George and Eva Weaver of Washington township, our county. He and Loma first took up residence in New York City. Their only child, Haakon, was born in 1908 at the Leigh Hunt Farm, Bethesda, Md. In 1921 they settled in North Webster and Ingvar died there in 1936.

H. K. Larsen attended school in North Webster and as a young man worked at the Chicago Board of Trade. He lived most of his adult life in the Webster community, and was instrumental in promoting the Mermaid Festival as a means to attract summer vacationers to Kosciukso county. He was once owner of the land on the East end of Webster Lake watershed which is now the site of Camp Adventure.

Basketball

March 12, 1969

In 1953, North Webster had a local basketball tourney winner after waiting for 30 years. Fate smiled on that team until they were eliminated in the regional finals by the eventual state champs. Sidney fans like to recall the '53 county tourney when their unhearlded team almost upset the Webster outfit. Some interest was added to that contest because Gene Likens of Sidney was playing against his cousin Bob Likens of Webster. Most agreed that the game ended just before Sidney won.

Bob is a busy, enterprising, young man who still lives in lakeland with his attractive family. Gene is a professor at Dartmouth. There are still some around who remember when Gene's father, Colonel, was a pitcher for Webster High while he was still in grammar school. It is safe to assume that Hoosier Hysteria did not hurt any of those mentioned above.

Chapter 6

Places

The "Continental Divide"

May 21, 1973

The "Continental Divide" sits in the middle of the lakeland area and sends our surface water and all it contains either north to the Great Lakes or south via the Tippecanoe to the Gulf. The Miami Indians tended to occupy the north slope and the Pottowatomies were in the south. The Tippecanoe was a Pottowatomie river. Along its banks were located a number of their villages and reservations. The name of the stream is derived from an Indian word Ke-tap-e-kon-nong, meaning the place of the buffalo fish. The water of this beautiful stream is the clearest of any river in the state and it flowed through many beautiful lakes. The Indians preferred to build their villages along its banks rather than on the lake shores. They used the flowing water for sewage disposal in much the same manner that their modern white brothers now use it. Their numbers were small so that water remained clean.

The "Jog in the Road"

August 7, 1968

Driving north on County Road 650 East soon after leaving Old Road 30, a slight jog in the road is encountered. Jogs of this sort indicate that you are crossing a township line. In laying out maps on flat paper, with roads running straight north-south, it was necessary to make these jogs in roads to compensate for the curve of the earth surface. When roads in this area were first surveyed, these small jogs were acceptable to the horse drawn traffic.

Silas Perry lived in a now abandoned house on the southeast corner of this particular jog. A small tree-ringed pond can still be seen there where Silas is said to have raised carp. When carp first became prevalent in the nearby lakes, some of the other natives blamed that small pond. Mr. Perry was a very versatile and enterprising man. He had his own forge, and was skilled at farming, raising fruit and keeping bees.

An interesting bit of lore has to do with his beeswax. Like most early settlers, he wore dentures, and they did not fit well. He is said to have decided to cast himself some new teeth, using his own hot beeswax to make the impression. The whole procedure ended in confusion. The wax burned his mouth, fell in to his beard and made an all around mess for cleaning up.

Dentists were infrequent circuit riders in the early times, whose main function was pulling teeth. "Uncle Ike" Kuhn used to tell youngsters about having an appointment with one who had tied up his horse at the school yard in Webster. They agreed upon the terms and Ike laid down in the grass with the dentist astride his chest, armed with a "turnkey" for twisting out the aching tooth. All went well but the terms were singular. If the tooth came out O.K. Ike was to tell the dentist where he had hidden a full bottle of whiskey in the weeds nearby. If unsuccessful Ike was to kill the dentist. Even allowing for some exaggeration, those "good old days" must have included some hard labor negotiation without today's "cooling off periods."

"Hoss Hills"

September 20, 1968

There are many Kosciusko residents who have never had time to drive through the HOSS HILLS. These same people have driven hundreds of miles to see territory less enthralling than the area lying south of Papakeechie Lake. With the fall coloring approaching this is a good time to see the place "Where the Devil said GOODBYE to the Owl." The first settlers of this beautiful strip of hills and lakes were a family named Hoss. Much lake lore is connected with the Hoss hills. It is now part of the Tri-County game and fishing area and is seen mostly by visitors from outside our county.

Marsh hay was once a crop harvested on the broad stretches of marsh land that bordered many of Kosciusko's lakes. These acres have mostly been filled or channeled to make building sites near the lakes. Rattlesnakes were plentiful and liked to crawl up on the small "doodles" of hay stacked around waiting to be loaded on the flat-bed. This hay was cheap because it grew wild on land that could not be used otherwise. It was used for horse feed and bedding. Window glass makers used it for packing the glass in wooden boxes. A dozen rattlers killed in one afternoon was not an unusual record. Hay "hands" were quick to strike one in mid-air when it fell out of a fork full of hay.

The "Drug Store"

May 5, 1969

Ervin's drug store was for many years a favorite loafing spot in Webster for lakers and natives alike. About this time every spring the soda fountain would be opened. There were tall stools in front of a high counter, and wire back chairs around "candy store" tables. Each got a complete coat of paint in preparation for "the season." On the back bar behind the ice cream counter were colorful jars, bottles, tanks, faucets, glasses and dishes. In each front window hung a large glass tank of colored liquid which seemed to proclaim "this is the place."

Arthur Ervin was a druggist from the old school. He smoked small, very thin cigars. By spring he had accumulated enough boxes from these smokes to store several varieties of fishhooks. He was quite talkative and could and would explain how to fish, camp, row, hunt, cook or paint. The natives were familiar with his stories and the lakers were entranced to hear him spin a yarn. Mrs. Ervin was so reticent that some visitors who knew her for years said they never heard her say more than yes or no.

Candy cases filled with "penny candy" left a real void in the growing up experience when they were removed for the sake of sanitation, fast service and economy. The store owners were very patient while a youngster pressed his nose against the case, gripped his penny and debated which glass tray to select from. The small candies were made to look like most anything. Bananas, peanuts, watermelon slices, suckers, jaw breakers, light and dark caramels, sour balls, cinnamon hearts, jujubes, candy corn, and locorice (lickorish) whips. Little wax bottles, pipes, and guns filled with a sweet red or green cordial were favorites. Every child learned that he could choose anything. The real lesson of the candy case was that the same penny could be spent only once, and a firm decision was necessary.

"Camp Crosley"

November 7, 1969

A keg of beer near third base was an ordinary sight during the first 10 years of this century. On the eastern shore of James Lake, in the area that now is partially occupied by Camp Crosley, there was an ideal site for campers. The lake bottom was good, the shore sloped gradually down to the beach, there was ample shade, and it was within walking distance of a provision supply base, North Webster. This area was part of a farm owned by a remarkable man, John Baugher, who was kind enough to allow campers to pitch their tents there. In those unhurried days, every small community had a baseball team. These teams were supported locally in a high-spirited, vigorous manner. Some of them would come to the Baugher camping grounds for short training periods. Teams from Syracuse, Milford, Webster, Oswego, Dutchtown and other settlements nearby would come to the pastureland baseball field to play exhibition games with the clubs training there on James Lake.

Home run hitters were allowed to pause at third base long enough to be handed their beer award for reaching that bag. On hot days the more enthusiastic beer drinkers were likely to try to steal third or stretch a double into a triple. Naturally there was a lot of fancy sliding and body contact on that corner of the diamond. Fast friendships were made from the doubtful starting point of a loud rhubarb arising from a close decision at third base.

"Old Log House"

December 17, 1970

North Webster has been losing some of her oldest houses. One that has been levelled recently has been carefully marked and charted and will be restored as it was originally built. The logs are numbered and will be used in the same positions when the two-story house is rebuilt as part of an area near the M&M restaurant to be called "Pioneer Village."

Purchased in 1896 by William & Dessie Fidler, from Luther Strombeck, this rugged house has been occupied by at least four generations of Fidlers. In the plastered walls of the second floor was found a newspaper printed in German and dated 1866. At that time the property was owned and occupied by John Weaver, usually pronounced Weber. He was a German who spoke and wrote only in his native language. The land he owned included the site now occupied by the M&M and much more of the surrounding territory. This old log house is so much a part of the local history that a quick reading of the abstract seems in order.

In 1838 on August 20, Martin Van Buren as President of the United States, deeded 240 acres to John Prickett. He and his wife Sarah almost immediately sold 60 acres of that area to Hiram Sanborn for $128. From that time until the War between the States most of the names of the early settlers appear on the pages of the abstract. Johnson, Muirheid, Yohn and Weber were names of families that lived in the section bounded by the south edge of Webster and extending beyond the Boydston's Mill territory.

In 1854 Benjamin and Elizabeth Yohn sold 80 acres to John and Mary Weaver for $1,200. The Weavers (or Webers) had nine children: Christena, Catherine, Elizabeth, Barbary, Adam, Phoebe, Mary, Magdelene, and John. The will of John Weber dated 1866 gives an accurate picture of the life in this area during those days. Probated two years later it provided that his son John was to buy the farm for $2,000 with this amount to be divided among the children after the death of their mother. One of the daughters, Christena never matured mentally and the son, John, was charged to "keep Christena during her natural life, and she is to have a room in the house upstairs, the north room which she now occupies." All of the Weber children carried out this provision in their father's will and what later became a considerable estate was used up in the devoted care of Christena. Sister Mary was married to Henry Strombeck and he was later appointed by the court to provide care for the unfortunate Christena. The court allowed him from $175 to $200 per year for providing "room, board, clothing and medical care." It was necessary that somebody be with her at all times so the social life of the Strombecks was strictly limited.

The old log house was occupied by one of the most propserous families in the area. So it must be assumed that the ordinary settlers must have led lives of endless desperation.

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December 19, 1970

The log house mentioned in a previous column was made of oak trees two sides of which were hewn more or less smooth. The flat sides of the logs were set facing inside and outside with the rough bark sides up and down. They were notched at the end to fit over each other. The longest logs were notched for 28 foot walls and stretched over the windows and doors. They were not particularly straight and the cuts at the ends seemed to have no uniformity. Much time must have been spent sharpening axes. The logs are still so hard that a sharp axe will almost bounce before it cuts into the wood. It must have taken several strong, smart men to set the 14-inch logs in place. They were not drilled or pegged but depended on their great weight to hold them in place. The top story was braced for rigidity and the "ridge beam" was pegged. The rafters had been taken to a saw mill and were fastened to the top beam with long cut nails.

A mixture of mud and oats straw filled the spaces between the logs. Some small limbs were stuffed in to help make it stick. It should be understood that this was an uncommonly fine house for the time. Many early settlers had to live one or two winters in a hut made of sod. These crude abodes had no windows, no ventilation and an animal skin was stretched across the exit. It is not clear why so many people decided to come to live in such a hostile environment.

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The confidence gap that exists today in respect to education would have mystified those early ones who had complete faith that if their children could just go to school, any other problems would be overcome by strength and native intelligence. One of the first acts was the building of a school and a church, often the same place.

The will of Ephriam S. Muirheid, written in 1849, partly explains the importance attached to education. After the usual provision for the wife, grown children and the payment of any debts—"My executor shall take or cause to be taken, by safe and comfortable conveyance, my three little daughters, Cassandra, Ruena and Virginia to their uncle Lewis C. Hall in Virginia. Enjoining upon him that the said children be given or cause to be given a good education." Many deeds and documents were dictated to a Justice of the Peace who not only wrote in precisely worded longhand, but ended by witnessing the "mark" (X) of the grantors.

"Stone Masonry"

November 13, 1968

Vestiges of a craft that is almost extinct may still be seen around the lakeland area. Stone walls made from split field stone are standing in unlikely places. Lots of bank barns have masonry walls made from this pattern. Some old homes had it used for basement walls but more often these were laid up by using small roundish field stones and lots of mortar.

Walter Baugher, Ed Black, and Ward Vanator were artisans adept at building walls of this type. A great pile of stones of various sizes, colors and textures was a must. The workmen were skilled in judging the grain of the stones, so they could split them with a masonry hammer. The shape and size of each stone was chosen so they would fit together smoothly and form an attractive color pattern. Many were discarded. The final product was a wall, bridge, or fireplace of unusual beauty. The patience and skill necessary for this type of craftsmanship will probably make it impractical to use for new construction. The samples still in evidence will long be interesting to students of artistic design.

There is a small bridge on the east-west road near the entrance to Hoy's Landing made with this method. On the north shore of Sechrist Lake there is a good example on foundation walls and fireplace of a home which belongs to Verle Wilkey. Those who recognize and appreciate this masonry will find a lot of it around Lakeland.

"Camp Meetings"

October 22, 1969

Camp meetings were a welcome diversion for Lakelanders during the summers around 1915. A group of Negroes conducted these in great tents in at least three locations in Tippecanoe township. Usually an entrance fee of 15 cents was charged to attend and a free will offering was collected. The singing was spirited and sometimes wonderful. The preaching was generally of the hellsfire and brimstone variety and sometimes it too was wonderful. Banjos, guitars, fiddles and much hand clapping combined to make the nights lively during the camp meetings. For a couple of summers a meeting was located across the road from the Barbee Hotel. Several summers it was located on a cleared knoll in a pretty woods south of the Webster Motel. A very popular camp meeting location was at Weimer Park on Webster Lake.

Avery Garber and Harold Baker still recall riding across the lake on the Dixie Boat to attend the meeting there. The music, the fervent preaching and the haunting Negro spiritual songs could be heard far out across the water. People walked some distance to see the big tent and so many other people. A particularly joyful meeting was likely to last until after midnight.

Camp Adventure is now located where a man once lived with eight small children. One night they had all walked around the lake to the Weimer Park meeting, and long after they had left for home the man returned asking, "Has anyone seen a little girl?" They had indeed left without one and found her safe in the care of one of the ladies of the choir.

It had been brought to the writer's attention that one of the powerful attractions at the summer camp tent meetings was the great beef roasts that often took place at the same time and place. Pit roasted "ox" seemed to smell and taste better than that prepared at home.

"Spring"

April 2, 1970

The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month. March seems so long that most people cannot remember whether it came in like a lion or a lamb. The thunder that accompanies the spring rains will evoke the same sort of stories and legends that thunder always has. Lakelanders used to assure their children trat there was nothing to fear from thunder. They also told them that the first claps of thunder awakened the turtles from their winter sleep. Presumably they were aroused from a deep sleep under the mud and started the climb up into the water. Snapping turtles are strange creatures when only the facts are considered. The myths about them are endless. Ditching contractors throw them up with dirt that has laid undisturbed for years, (fact). After a turtle's head is removed, it will bite hard on anything interested therein, (fact). His heart will continue the steady beat long after it is separated from the turtle (fact). It was said to beat until sundown, (fiction). Some thought that a biting turtle would hang on until sundown, (fiction).

Fish worm-oil was supposed to keep muscles strong, flexible, and free from cramps. The "con-men" who sold sure cures for everything called it "snake-oil." Many country people gathered around the back of the "medicine man's" truck or wagon to hear his presentation. Those who remember these men and their sales pitch find the TV commercials very familiar. Canned music and canned applause take the place of the banjo playing Indian and the crowd of yesterday. Thoughts of old fashioned superstitions makes one wonder whether children still "stamp" white horses for good luck, rub the hair of a black cat to make sparks or spit on the fish bait to attract the fish.

"Fall"

September 25, 1968

Fall has begun and Lakelanders will have their attention drawn to TREES as the coloring progresses. Like any other piece of real estate, a wooded area needs care to make it attractive and profitable. Trees with value for timber should be felled at the proper size and sold to make room for young stock. A clean woods is a pretty sight.

Boys have always carried a Pocket Piece, it used to be a Buckeye. Ohio had the greatest number until a plague almost wiped them out. The white spot on the brown nut gave the buckeye its name. After being carried for a time these nuts took on a fine polish and some people thought the bearer was protected from rheumatism. These large nuts are enclosed by spiny husks which open to let them fall to the ground.

The leaflets of buckeye and horse chestnuts, radiate out like the fingers of your hand, and the blossoms are yellow or pink flowers, in loose clusters and their nectar is poisonous to bees. There is a buckeye tree on the south lawn of the courthouse in Warsaw.

Thickets of SUMACS are now starting to show bright red color. The red pointed seed pods have given them the name STAGHORN sumac. These thickets spread rapidly and are brittle enough to be broken by small sboys intent on building houses, fortresses, etc.

SASSAFRAS will be the next splash of color as the rich orange and red leaves turn. This plant was called "Green stick" by the Indians. The dried bark of its root was used for a spring tonic. Lake lore suggested that sassafras tea would increase perspiration and prepare one for Summer's hot work. Leaf collectors are confused by the peculiar variation of leaf shapes found on the same tree. Some are mitten-shaped, some three-lobed and some single. It's hard to find a sassafras to transplant even though it grows in large thickets. Almost every one you dig up will be found attached to a root from another larger tree. This ornamental tree is worth the effort.

HEDGE APPLE, or the Osage Orange, when found in this area has been planted for living fences. Every "country slicker" has enjoyed taking the round rough fruit to his city cousin. You can't bite or cut it, but it gets comment. Indians used the tough wood for war clubs and bows.

"Trapping"

October 29, 1969

Lakeland natives of a half century ago were busy at this time of year preparing for a cash crop resulting from trapping. The cisco fishing was another profitable project for some young men at that time. Two or three men could take five or six hundred pounds of these fish in one night and quickly sell them for 10 cents per pound. Two or three would sometimes erect a tent about this time in the fall, and live in it to be near the fishing and trapping territory. Their homes might have been less than five miles distant, but in those days five miles respresented much more than five minutes.

After the cisco fishing was finished, the trapping began. The shoreline of the lakes and channels was divided and each trapper had a great number of traps to "run." Muskrat furs brought in the most money because they were plentiful and in good demand at high prices. The traps had to be run early in the morning and late in the evening. It was hard work, wet and cold, and very little time could be alloted for each trap. The first few nights of the season afforded the greatest catch. Some good trappers could bring in a hundred or more skins from one trip over their "string" of traps. A very sharp knife was essential in taking high quality skins with the proper speed.

Mink, beaver and a very rare badger gave added interest to the steady trapping of the rats. Skunks were usually trapped on high ground and seldom skinned where they were caught. The water animals were not always dead when found and they were all willing to bite if they could not flee. A really "turned on" feeling was quickly generated when one of these fellows glared at the trapper and decided to try to sell his life for inconvenience. Rats were capable of chewing off their foot if the trap could be lifted above water and they had enough time.

The furtive "running" of another's traps was considered to be a very serious bit of misconduct. Lifelong enmities have been created by the mere suspicion that this has happened.

"Ice"

November 15, 1968

The dates on which the lakes freeze solid vary greatly. There have been mild, windy winters when they never get enough ice to walk across safely. The first ice cover of the season is as important to youngsters as the first snowfall. It is most interesting if it happens on a clear, windless, cold night. This ice is very hard, smooth, and almost completely transparent. This clear early ice is safe although still thin. Walking across it is almost like walking on smooth water. Fish, weeds and all of the bottom can be seen easily.

When the shoreline was not so well populated, muskrat houses protruded through the surface of the water and/or the ice. These animals could be seen swimming just below the ice on trips to the shore and back to the house. The hollow part inside the house extended above the water level and allowed the rats to breathe while still inside the house.

These pathways under the ice followed by the muskrats were very unusual. A string of bubbles under the ice was clearly visible and marked the path taken to and from the house. The natives used to insist that these bubbles were left there instinctively by each rat for the purpose of gathering back the air in order to make the return trip. Most of us "outlanders" thought they were spoofing us. We did see the strings of bubbles, but never the process of picking them up. The first snow on fresh slick ice melts and freezes and ruins the view as well as the skating.

Chapter 7

Things

"Newspaper"

December 1, 1971

The North Webster News was printed in 1897 and there are a few tattered copies still in readable condition. Frank Rudy is listed as proprietor and publisher, and it came out every Thursday. Readers were asked to pay $1 per year in advance or $1.25 "if not paid within a year." There was little thought given to the composition of this paper as advertising, personal comments, humor and news tumbled out for the reader to make his own selection. A sample of a column called "Personal and Miscellaneous" follows.

Fine cigars at the Meat Market. Mrs. Eli Marks had a severe spell of sickness Sunday. Lewis Baugher was at Ligonier Thursday on business. Oliver Chilled Plows and repairs at Garber Brothers. A Scott and wife were at the city by the lake Monday. Crackers, Gingersnaps, Bologna, sardines and cove oysters at the Meat Market. It is astonishing how many men there are who can play the fiddle. First class paperhanging, see J. G. Hahn. The shower Friday was a Godsend to our farmers. Patronize your local Dentist, Dr. Todd at the Midlakes Hotel. The lightning painless tooth extractor. Crowns $3, plates $13, extractions 25c—free on Fridays. Straw Hats 5c up at Haines Cash Store. Ox Blood and Chocolate shoes are the rage—Garber Bros. Lute Strombeck was so unfortunate to lose one of his horses Friday. JL Bowlby of Wilmot was on our streets Friday. You have no doubt remarked how affectionate a worthless man is in politics. William Sommey, our Deputy Prosecutor was here Thursday. Work in the lodge is about the only work some men do. J. F. Bockman took in the city lying 14 miles to the southwest. Two much goodness is as monotonous as too much evil. Home Market quotations: Hay per ton $6, Eggs 12c, Butter 10c, Lard 5c, Hides 4½c, Corn 20c, Oats 15c, Chickens 4½c, and Turkeys 6c. There are more men than women who claim they are unable to work. If some men were to lose their reputation they would be lucky. Dr. L. Hawkins, Botanic Physician and Surgeon—Chronic Diseases a Specialty — North Webster, Ind.

"Ice Boxes"

February 19, 1969

Putting up ice used to be a very important ceremony all around the Lakeland area. It was such hard work that most of those who were engaged in it are satisfied to have it relegated to the "good old days." When electricity and electric refrigerators became practical, the many ice houses underwent alterations and became barns, cottages, boat houses and bonfires in a short time.

Ice houses were maintained at all the lakes in almost all sizes. Some individual farmers, most groceries, hotels, camps, and resort owners put up ice and every neighborhood had crews of men skilled at getting it off the lakes and into the houses. The houses of moderate size were usually made of concrete blocks with steep pitched roofs. There were no back doors or side doors, just one vertical row or doors up the middle of the front of the house. These were small squarish doors made sturdy and heavy with thick timbers and diagonal batts. Heavy hinges and hasps kept these doors in proper condition to withstand very rough treatment.

An ice plow looked about like a small horse drawn hand held field plow. In place of the plow shear was a series of hook shaped cutting tools of graduated depths. People always tried to "make ice" when it was hard and clear and about eight inches thick. The plow was usually pulled by a single, steady, unexcitable, horse wearing "can't slip" shoes. It made thin cuts into the ice five or six inches deep, and two feet apart. A marker extended out to the side to scratch where to make the next cut. This operation was repeated at right angles, and a channel was cut to the shore a little wider than the ice blocks. A heavy steel ice spud was used to separate the criss-crossed blocks and they were floated, pushed and pulled up to the land near the ice house. Various methods, all vigorous, were used to get them into the ice house.

After a thick layer of sawdust was laid over the dirt floor the cakes were stacked in a great cube encased in a foot or more of sawdust. Each layer was swept clean and the sawdust insulated so well that the cakes were about the same thickness when chipped loose and wrestled out the following August. Most ice boxes required about 50 pounds or one-fourth of a 24x30 inch block.

Fifteen cents per hour, or $1.50 per day was paid to the men putting the ice in storage. The horse was worth more. The ice was sold for 20c per hundredweight or 30c if delivered. Anybody who has had the job of taking ice out of a house and delivering it can testify that it was a very hot, hard job. Tips, food, and any favors granted to the iceman were earned. He moved the fish and milk, chipped in the unmelted ice, and emptied the ice box pan. On single floor cottages, a funnel through a hole often replaced the pan.

Spontaneous combustion was a hazard when the sun overheated the roofs of ice houses, and the sawdust made wonderful fires. Lots of Lakelanders remember rushing in to Warsaw to watch an enormous fire when the ice house burned at Center Lake.

"Electricity"

July 24, 1968

"JUICE" was the word used to describe electricity at the time it was first being introduced throughout the Lakeland townships. Dave Cunningham was the man who started the first electric utility in and around North Webster. Dave was a very enterprising man with a distinctive personality. He had a genuine British accent and gave the impression that he might crack but never bend. His sister was a short, very short lady who loved to talk to anybody, especially outsiders. In the days of slow cars and dusty roads it was not unusual to see this little gray-haired lady almost trotting beside a car which had stopped to ask directions. She too had the British accent.

The original patrons of the light company in Tippecanoe township were required to purchase stock in the enterprise. One of these was Phillip Kuhn, who owned extensive properties on Big and Little Barbee and Sechrist Lake. When they started to install the posts and cables he was puzzled. A fine old gentleman, who was completely honest and frank, he said "I thought they'd bring in the juice in pipes."

Street lights of a very basic type, were soon installed in Webster, and the switch was placed outside the entrance of the hardware store. Some tension arose when some of the town elders would stroll past about nine p.m. and turn off the lights. "Why pay for juice for street lights after the time most proper folks are in bed?"

"Caves"

September 30, 1968

Most early Lakeland farm houses and many of the houses in the villages had a CAVE. It was (and still is) near the back door. That door usually led off the kitchen. A cave can be identified by a mound of sod covered soil, with cement blocks at one end with a slanted door leading down steps to a regullar vertical door into the cave. The cave itself was as small as 8 by 10 feet and sometimes larger. The ceiling was made of heavy planks or poured concrete. The walls were field stones or cement blocks. Shelves were built on at least two walls and were supported by poles driven into the dirt floor. The dirt that was thrown out of the original hole was mounded over the top and made wonderful insulation. Some of them had a small vent to let a little air circulate from below.

Very few old houses had basements and the cave was a very important place to store canned goods and anything that needed protection from freezing and cool storage in summer. Barrels of apples, potatoes, pears, and other fruit gave the place a distinctive fragrance. Some light would come in through the doorway but usually it was furnished by a lantern. People who lived near a lake often used the cave during the summer as a place to keep turtles. Most had turtle traps and it was very convenient to just leave them loose on the cave floor until one was required for a meal. They needed no food but every couple of days it was well to through a bucket of water over them to let them soak it up. You can imagine the tense moments that took place when the door was pushed open and a hundred different hisses greeted the intruder who wanted to pick up one for dinner. Some of the more daring kept their illegal fish-net hidden in the cave.

The mail order firms sold flavoring and bottling equipment for root-beer, pop and other soft drinks. The cave was a storage place for this activity as well as the prohibition inspired custom of making HOME BREW. Everybody had a tale of the doors being blown off a cave during an explosion of home brew.

As electric refrigerators and freezers became popular and homes were built with basements, the cave was relegated to just a lump in the back yard. For many years it was a very important part of survival in rural Kosciusko county. Strangely, in this nuclear age, caves may again become important.

The crude simplicity of a cave was duplicated by the early homes built around our area. There was no insulation, no furnace, no plumbing, no wiring and no kitchen equipment except that moved in. Closets were unknown and stairways were very narrow and steep. The main function of a house was to keep out the rain and stop most of the snow. The cook-stove, heating stove, and bath and/or laundry tub was carried into the house. Water came from a pump near the back door and stove and lamp fuel was carried in as ashes were carried out. Every boy and girl knew about the CHORES and their importance.

"Telephones"

February 7, 1969

Some time ago telephones in our county were much less complicated and less efficient than they are now. In the early days around the lakes it was great fun to stand around a phone while somebody from Chicago or Indianapolis tried to complete a call. After shouting, shaking and pounding on the old wall-hung, crank type phone, the visitor would finally retire to have a smoke and restore his temper. About that time some native would give the crank a short turn and say, "Elsie, gimme my Mom." No number, just quick service. Then, as now, people took for granted the successful calls and stormed about the others.

The Barbee telephones were handled by the Pierceton Telephone Co. which was owned and operated by John Bresnahan, pronounced "Junnie Brosnahan." In the days before radio it was the only connection with the outside world. Important news events, election and sports results were quickly available by asking "Central." Local news spread rapidly by way of the "party line" system. Neighbors who lived far apart were kept in close touch by this "Hoosier-jungle-drum" wire. The operator was called "Central" and learned to be most discreet in handing important calls in delicate situations.

Several subscribers in one area had their phones all on the same line and when any phone was rung, the others rang too. Combinations of "long" and "short" rings indicated which party was being summoned. Any or all other phones on one line could listen or join the conversation by lifting the receiver. It was common for callers to say "I can't tell you over the phone."

The operators learned to recognize the voices of all the members of all the families as well as their school, club and church affiliation. They willingly granted many services that would be impossible today. Nobody dreamed that they would ever pick up the phone and listen to a metallic beast give them advice! After most of the phones in Tippecanoe township were transferred to the Webster exchange the number of subscribers grew rapidly.

The early days of the local systems had many interesting aspects. In case of a fire, or other emergency everybody's phone rang many short rings frantically, and the operators announced what and where was the trouble. At noon there was a similar common ring when items of area interest were announced. A short commercial might say the Bockman's grocery had a special on very good sweet corn, or that Garber & Phelps had an oversupply of sugar at bargain prices. There is not room enough in one column to describe the early local telephone experiences.

Wall phones were hung high on the wall for several reasons. Small children could not remove the receiver or reach the crank. They had to be big enough to carry a chair before they could use or misuse a phone. Early phones located in this area were used almost exclusively for emergency or neighborhood social calls. Standing talkers could not talk endlessly. "Listening in," while expected, was limited to those willing to stand and ignore their "chores." Serious business was seldom transacted by telephone. To this day most Lakelanders who have lived here several generations, do not consider a phone call as a responsible method of transacting business. It is much more effective to "go to see" somebody than to phone him. Most of the Lakeland natives would never use a phone during a thunderstorm.

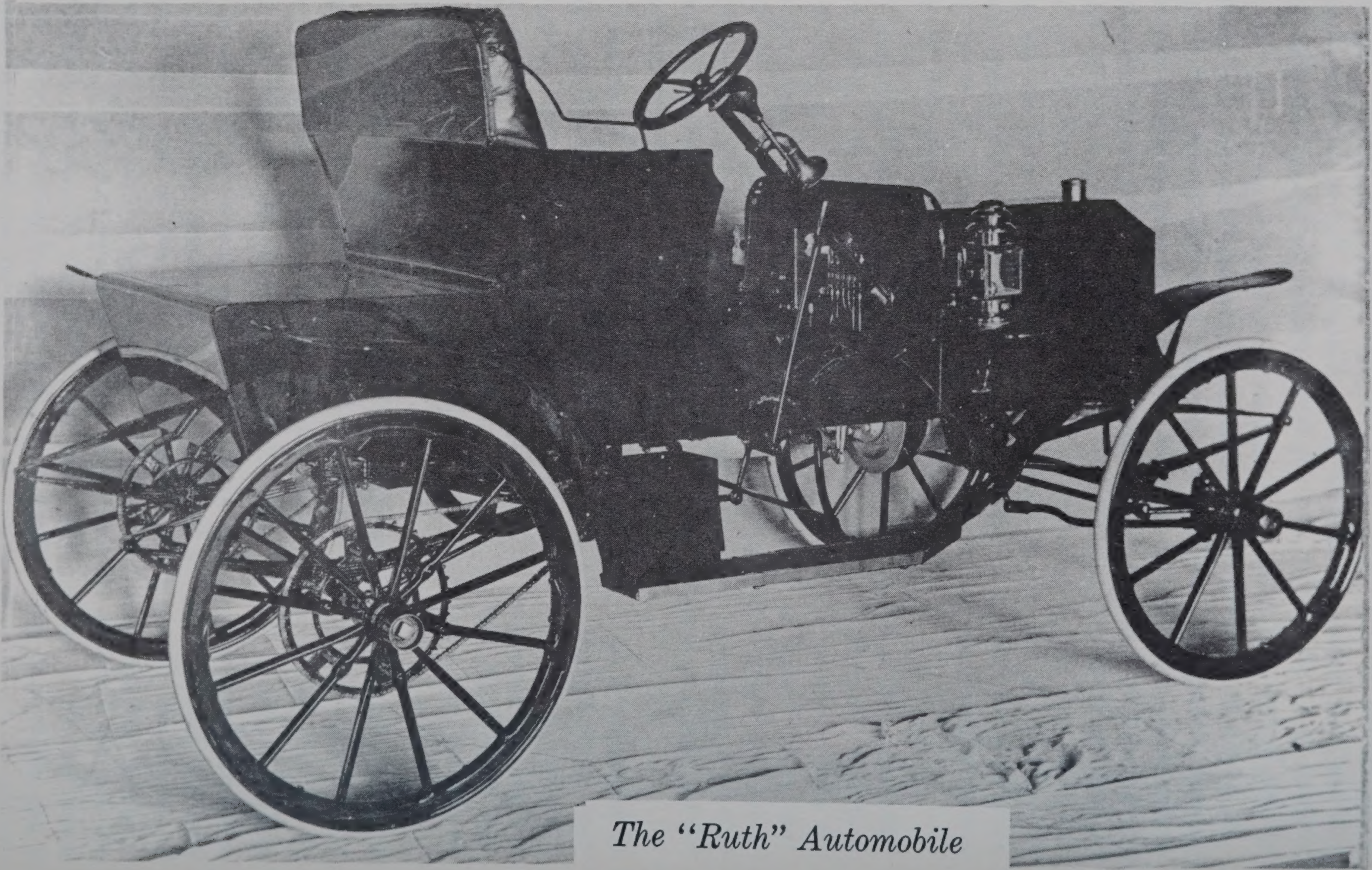
Telephone linemen really had their fingers on the pulse of the areas under their care. The Webster exchange was serviced by Fred Anglin, Leesburg, Sam Archer, Cromwell, pronounced "Crumwell" and Wade Zerbe, who still lives in Syracuse, pronounced "Saracuse" or sometimes "Cuse." Mary Morris ran the exchange at one time, and the switchboard closed at 10 p.m. Callers could ring on their own line all night. Imogene Menzie ran the board there for some time and Harold Gaskill would sit before it as a boy and get paid an easy 10 cents per hour.

Fred Seniff had the Webster phone company for a time and charged $1 per month for service. Those who used it very little thought it was outrageous. There were long periods when "the phones were out," usually due to wind or ice storms. Subscribers always tried to find where the line was down before they drove in to town to report the trouble. Quite often they could find enough wire to patch up the line and would not bother the company.

Battery wall phones were bought from mailorder houses and lots of people got pretty good at stringing wire well enough to connect their house with one or two neighbors. Some of the summer residents would install them on an outside post or tree so the ring could be heard for some distance. These "private lines" were legal unless hooked on to a regular company phone line. When the United Telephnoe Co. began buying and consolidating the local exchanges, one of the first improvements was eliminating the individual batteries and subsituting power at the switchboard, known as the "battery" system. Pretty soon the phones rang only in the houses where the call was destined. This was the beginning of the end of the intimacy of the multi-party line. Communicating by phone has grown steadily more dependable and is taken for granted now by all.

The first instrument invented for making calls without an operator, used a system of push buttons, instead of the familiar dial. It is said to have been designed by a LaPorte man who was not a natural inventor, but was tired of getting "wrong numbers."

All of the Kosciusko county volunteer fire departments long depended-on the local exchanges to call themselves together. In North Webster that meant simply, "bring your bucket." The first real fire fighting equipment purchased was some ladders and a long row of buckets hanging in an open shed back of the bank building.



The "Ruth" Automobile

The "Ruth" Automobile

May 3, 1973

Observe the "RUTH" automobile as a product of a time that must have been more tranquil for lakelanders. This little gem (see picture opposite) was manufactured in North Webster in 1907. That was the year the Midlakes Hotel was destroyed by fire on the site now occupied by the town bank. This area will be the center of what will be known as "Camelot Square." Let us skip those digressions and get back to the tranquillity of a time to build a trim little vehicle such as the Ruth auto. Car buffs will note the chain-drive, the hand operated horn near the steering weel and the oil burning lamp on the right side of the car. Buggies and wagons were traditionally driven from the right side of the front seat. Notice also the flexible spring suspension, the easy to locate radiator cap, convenient running boards that extended to become "mud-guards." Instead of falling into cars you could step up onto the running board with some dignity.

Mack Mock, Charlie Daniels and Henry Outcelt were the principal operators of this brief but exciting enterprise. Who knows how many other villages dreamed in vain of making a horse-less carriage and are now happy that they did not become another Detroit and part of the transportation crisis, population crisis, etc, etc. It is interesting to note that each of the three men mentioned above, had a small daughter named "Ruth" at that time. Ruth Outcelt Wertenberger of Elkhart recalled riding in one of the cars that was owned by Ira Gans of Columbia City. Others were owned by Mr. Daniels who owned the barn where they were assembled, and Dr. Lyons bought one to speed him to his round of house calls. Mr. Mock was said to have been called "Tinker" and could make parts to fix anything ranging from a watch to a threshing-machine. He was later associated with Mr. Outcelt in the "Rapid Rim Co.," a predecessor to the demountable rim for easing the chore of roadside repair. After inflated tires came into use it was usually necessary to stop for tire-tube patching at least twice on a trip as far as from Webster to Syracuse.

"Indian Ranger of Redwood"

1968

Those words remind many lakeland residents that not all of the bold local enterprises have been financial or artistic successes. Two decades ago a movie film was made near North Webster which was notable but not successful. James Durham, who was a substantial freeholder of the area, decided to make a movie using all local people as actors. The film was shot in the fall, and most of the scenes were made on the Durham farm southeast of Webster. The fall coloring, the small lake, the hereford calves, the well tended pasture and fields all combined to make a very soothing setting. A partial list of the cast would include: Cloise Mock, an Indian, Everett Berger, Justice of the Peace, Tony Strombeck, the Ranger, Patty Berger, his love interest, the small Durham twins played their sons. (In real life Pat and Tony later married and became the parents of twins, Doug and Dave. Harold Barker who played the Judge, later served as bailiff in Judge Gene Lee's court.

Two memorable scenes of this Lakeland epic were: paddling upstream in an aluminum canoe, and shooting a stuffed pheasant off a freshly sawed stump with a fiberglass bow. Patty Berger was an inexperienced cook at that time and had much trouble flipping pancakes over the campfire. Mr. Durham also built a movie theater in Webster which has been used in recent years for weekly auction sales. Thus ended the dream of having a New Hollywood in Tippecanoe township.

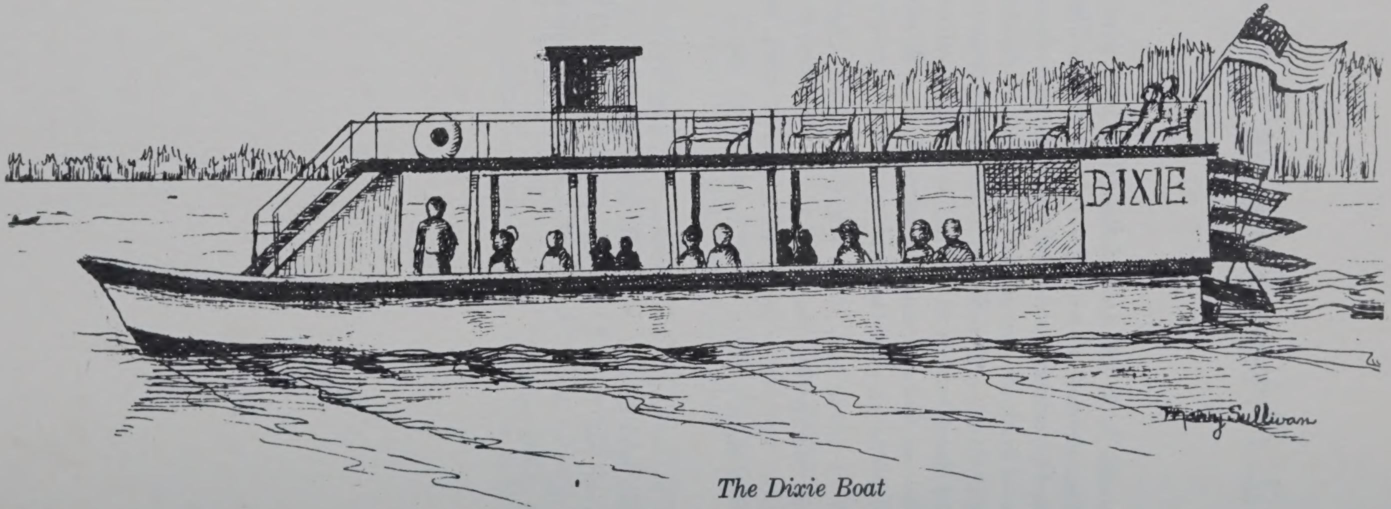
"Mail-Grocery Boats"

August 12, 1968

Before cars or roads around the lakes were very dependable, the water was used as connection with the outside world. The more populated lakes, Wawasee, Tippecanoe, and Webster had many summer residents who rarely used cars or buggies for getting provisions and supplies. Grocery stores in the nearby towns would deliver right to your pier or boat landing. Quite often they would call for and deliver your mail on the same trip. Many summer homes were almost out of contact with each other except for the fact that the same water washed up to every front door.

Almost all of the very finest home sites were used up 40 or 50 years ago. That is the reason the newcomer who wants to build a nice home "on a nice big lakefront lot, with a sandy beach, large trees, and a good access road" will not find such a place unless he wants to buy a very old home and tear it down.

Practically nobody could foresee the vast increase in the cost and value of lakeland real estate. A standard bit of humor in this area is listening to some fibber tell "I could have bought all this side of the lake for $200 but my wife wouldn't let me." Most of the owners of large acreage on the lakes had the right grandparents.



The Dixie Boat

The "Dixie Boat"

October 28, 1968

The DIXIE BOAT is about to be "laid up" for the winter. When time comes to run her in to Fisherman's Cove and get her ready for the ice, you can bet that winter is soon due in Lakeland. Paddle wheel boats are being again built now for many lakes and rivers. They are made to look old but work new. The big stern-wheel barely touches the water, while the power comes from an underwater propeller. Small boys notice that the Dixie Boat is actually driven by the paddle-wheel, because it reverses to back up.

In 1906 a summer visitor at Webster lake was Capt. Joe Breeck, who had been an Ohio River boat pilot, out of Madison, Ind. He built a steam-powered, single deck stern wheeler which was 20 feet long. It was named the "CITY OF WEBSTER," and was used at times as a floating black-smith shop, for serving farms near the lake. Sunday afternoons it became a sightseeing boat for passengers. Lakeside housewives used it as a ferry to get to the town's markets. It overturned and sank and "Cap" Breeck, who lived in summer on an island in Webster Lake, built a new one in 1914.

This was a real beauty, 50 feet long, double deck, and flat bottomed, with a steam driven paddlewheel. This Dixie boat was very popular until it was destroyed by fire in 1928. Some of the cabins of the present Dixie camp were built out of lumber salvaged from the burned Dixie. The "Hills and Lakes" highway ran along the shore of Webster Lake and motorists on this busy road were all familiar with the Dixie Boat.

In 1929, a steel hull was shipped by rail from the Barbour Boat Works, St. Louis, to Leesburg. It was made in three pieces and was hauled by wagon to Webster where it was assembled at the foot of the main street at the lake. "Bud" Mock and "Doc" Hamman assembled her with the advice and help of everybody in Tippecanoe township. A Fordson tractor engine was installed and a paddle wheel was driven by a belt. Later several car motors were used. Harold Gaskill, of Webster worked on the Dixie for Captain Joe and sometimes visited him at Madison. On these visits he met Hazel, the girl he later married, and they now live in North Webster.

Jay Knapp bought the boat and cabins in 1939 and operated them until 1949, when he sold to Earl Ungericht, who installed a diesel motor in the Dixie. The wheel is turned by an electric motor which gets current generated by the diesel engine. This system allowed the pilot house to be moved forward to give the captain better position for control.

Present owner is Ernest "Tag" Huffman, who bought the Dixie just eight years ago this fall. He makes regularly scheduled trips following the shoreline. Two hundred people can ride in comfortable seats. The trip around Webster Lakes takes one hour which includes time for stopping at designated points for exchanging passengers. The calliope music is anticipated by the landlubbers and enjoyed by the passengers.

In 1955 the Webster Lions club sponored a SHOW BOAT evening with the Dixie pulling up to the town landing. Singers were featured from the Epworth Forest choir school. This is now an annual concert.

The Dixie boat has long had a prominent part in the Mermaid Festival. She will soon be trussed up tight so that the wind and ice will not damage her and she can once again haul happy loads in 1969.

"Threshing"

September 24, 1969

Bill Kuhn, Sam Whissler and "Bud" Mock were very important cogs in the threshing ring process in Tippecanoe township. The farmers pooled their work during the threshing days, but these men actually ran the steam engine and the threshing machine. Farm wives too, helped each other prepare the bountiful meals that the threshers ate. Without refrigeration many wonderful meals were spoiled when it rained and they couldn't work. The steam engine looked like a locomotive that had left the railroad as it chugged along the dusty roads. Much skill was required to choose the spot for the engine and separator to set. The wind was watched, the straw stack location was considered, fuel for the hungry steam engine was stacked, a tank wagon was filled at the nearest channel with the aid of a hand pump. Some farm wives had reputations for serving lavish meals to the threshers. Some teenage boys who were visiting the lakes would volunteer to help just for the fun of pulling up to the threshers table. The work was hot and very hard so the food must have been special. When evening and exhaustion came it was a real pleasure for young and old to fall into the cool waters of the lakes.

"Golf Courses"

April 25, 1973

The lush greenery of the countryside has encouraged the golf course care crews to extend themselves this spring. As it has with many other sports, TeeVee has stimulated interest and understanding of the game of golf. There are still a few players who remember when golf courses were called "the links," clubs were called "sticks" and instead of several numbers the metal headed sticks had names like 'mashie,' 'brassy' and 'spoon.' The wood shafts sometimes warped into useful shapes that made their owner treasure them.

The local natives observed the "lakers" play in their peculiar garb with tolerant amusement. Knee-socks and knickers gave way to "plus-fours" and finally the men wore trousers (later called slacks), removed their neckties and took the game seriously. Robert Tyre Jones, a Georgia lawyer, played on weekends, rarely practiced, and as an amateur won all of the major tournaments and dominated the game during roaring twenties. Golf was his game but not his business.

"Bands"

BAND CONCERTS were very popular and important events in most rural towns and many years. Villages had band stands and took great pride and pleasure in marching music and the local concerts. It was a real distinction as well as an obligation to be chosen to be a member of these bands.

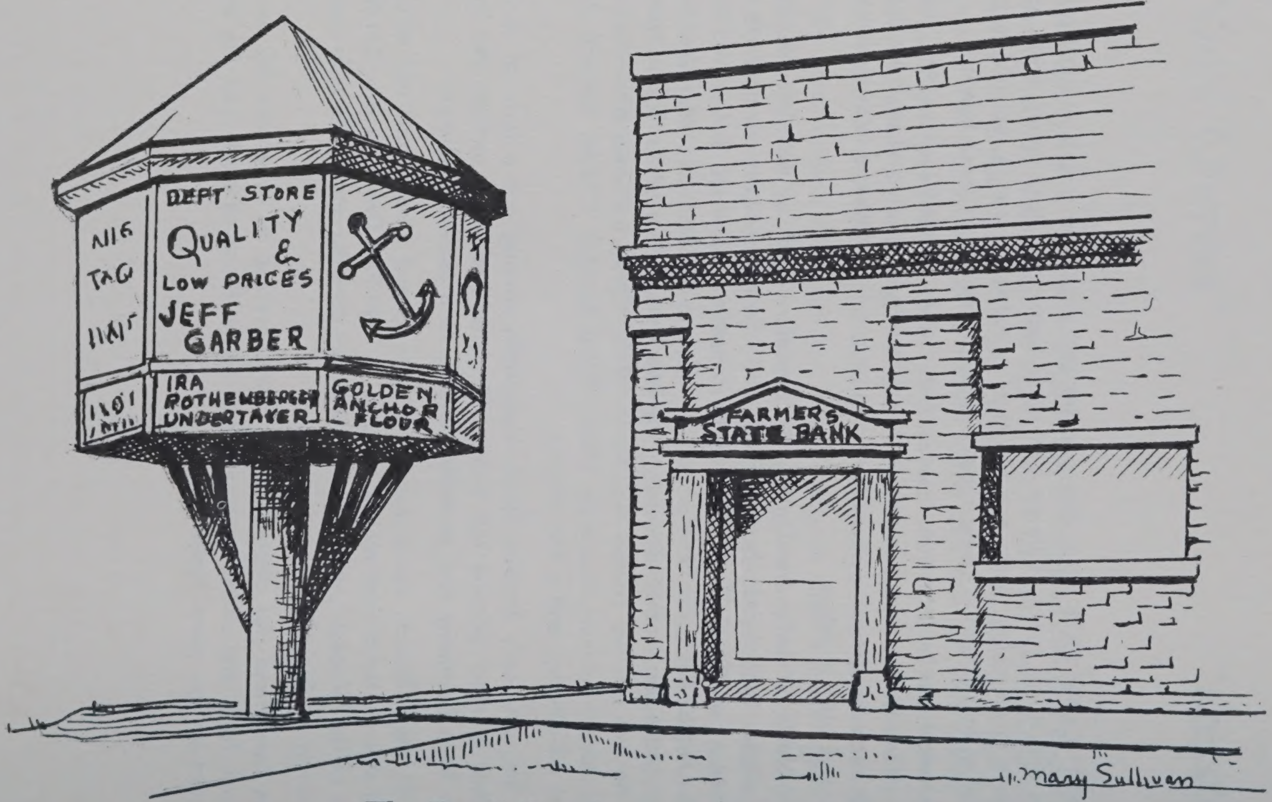
Pierceton was known as the town with the great cornet band, and directors from other towns were honored to wield the baton before them. As these bands took on special styles, it became popular for them to visit back and forth and play together.

The North Webster band gave one concert a week at their own circular band stand, two at neighboring towns and one more night was devoted to practice. Earl (Pete) Black of Epworth Forest was the last director of this band. Justice Buell, Bill Foreman, John Richison, Ike Kline, Mr. Wagoner and Victor Mock were other directors. Vic Mock had the position for 14 years until he was elected county Auditor in 1910. Other members of this band were: Alva Hamman, Laurence Mock, Philip Bechtol, Charles Gerard, Dr. Lyons, Bill Dorsey, and a Mr. Morris.

In the very early frontier times, community singing was a form of social life that created genuine folk music. This area had many settlers who had come from Germany and regarded singing as a second language.

With the railroads, came musical instruments and soon Elkhart was established as a center of such manufacturing. In 1899 Paul Dresser wrote "On the Banks of the Wabash" which musical historians consider one of the truly great folk songs of America.

The bandstand was doomed when it was pratical to drive cars for some distance to attend motion pictures. Part of the flavor of small town life was doomed at the same time.



The Band Stand

"1836 to 1971"

October 22, 1971

From Boydston's Mill to Camelot Square might describe the period in the history of the lakeland area which has captured the imagination of the natives as well as the visitors who are impressed and puzzled at the activity in North Webster. One of the most difficult steps in the expedition toward the legendary King Arthur theme is now being taken.

A huge sign is being erected along the north side of the new parking area and it will be one of the very largest signs in Indiana. The time and effort required to plan and construct this sign can be explained by the staggering statistics. The steel supports are set in concrete footings that required more than 100,000 pounds of "Ready-Mix" poured in forms set deep in the ground. The sign will stretch a full 100 feet in length and will face the parking area. Across the top will be spires and flags designed to catch the eye and herald the approach to Camelot Square. The highest points are to be approximately 40 feet from the ground level so the load of wind resistance was a serious consideration. The top and bottom edge of the 1,400 square feet of the space will be lined with 36 shields made of black fiberglass and about four by six feet in size. At each end will be a sceptor 11 feet high.

A tall light has been erected for the car parking area and appears to be about the highest thing in town. It will have four 1,000 watt lamps to illuminate a complete acre of area, and will provide adequate light for the great sign. The local people will be proud of having the greatest sign in Indiana until some "flatlander" can prove that somewhere there is a longer, bigger or better one. The sign and the light are evidence of the faithful following of the legend of Camelot and the willingness to "dream no little dreams." North Webster has always been unable to do much pointing with pride, because there has been so little worth a good point.

Other lakeland villages were always easy to identify. One was near the largest lake, one near the biggest duckling farms, one on the greatest railroad, etc, etc. Now the residents of the "friendly little city" will be able to speak of their sign and feel that they too, have a distinctive feature. Many people have planned, argued, disagreed, and worked together to make this first step possible, and a few of them have names like: Beezley, Clutter, Mullett and Shoop.

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